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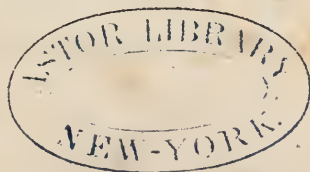
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THE
LIFE
OF
OLIVER GOLDSMITH, M. B.

FROM
A VARIETY OF ORIGINAL SOURCES.

BY
JAMES PRIOR,

FELLOW OF THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES; MEMBER OF THE ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY;
AUTHOR OF THE LIFE OF BURKE, ETC.



PHILADELPHIA:
E. L. CAREY & A. HART.

1837.

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TO
HIS GRACE,
THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND,
K. G.
&c. &c. &c.

MY LORD DUKE,

THE following pages, and the new and more perfect edition of the Miscellaneous Works of Goldsmith which will immediately succeed them, originated during your Administration of the Irish Government, at the time when circumstances afforded me the honour of an introduction to your Grace; and to you they are now appropriately inscribed. An Earl of Northumberland was the first to offer assistance and patronage to the Poet; and for the amusement of his Countess, the beautiful ballad of the "Hermit" was written. Were I to assign further motives for the present address, they would be the moderation of your character and measures in the Government of his native country during a period of much political disquiet; and the princely munificence extended, where it was so much wanted, toward her public charities. These are merits which, among her many angry and unhappy contentions, admit of no diversity of opinion; and claim from every native of Ireland that respect which is felt by,

MY LORD DUKE,
Your Grace's most obedient

And very faithful servant,

JAMES PRIOR.

PREFACE.

BIOGRAPHY has been justly characterized as combining much useful instruction with a large share of amusement; and no description of it has been more popular than the lives of literary men. One of the reasons of this preference probably is, that we are naturally curious about what is more particularly considered the history of Mind; and in such accounts we are often enabled to trace it in active operation while giving birth to productions that have won the admiration of mankind. Neither is the personal career of such persons without many, and sometimes uncommon vicissitudes: from their lives we turn to their writings with increased interest; and delight in contrasting perhaps the follies and weaknesses that have marked the one, with the wisdom and excellence shown in the other.

To this agreeable department of literature, Ireland, though not deficient in eminent names, has contributed less than the sister countries; and her zeal has been thence thought lukewarm in celebrating the praises of her offspring. The cause however is not owing to indifference to their fame, but to the fact of the individuals having commonly transferred their talents to England, and thus lost something of that nationality which would have more particularly identified them with their native country. Among her divines, philosophers, and statesmen, there are several whose lives yet remain to be written. The remark applies equally to her poets: indeed, there are few of these whose history is familiar to the general reader. Of Roscommon, for instance, although a nobleman and necessarily moving in a sphere of life more open to observation than men of inferior rank, little comparatively is known; little at least of that species of detail which gives biography its chief charm. The same may be said of Denham; for Denham, though of English ancestry, being born in Ireland, may fairly be claimed as an Irish writer. With regard to Farquhar, whose genius for comedy was not excelled by either Congreve or Sheridan, little of a satisfactory nature is recorded of his private life; nay, we have hardly any details of his more public career, excepting the facts of his having been an actor upon the stage, and afterwards an officer in the army: of Boyse (author of the "Deity") we know only that he was of reckless and dissipated habits; of John Cunningham, known for his ballads and a variety of poetical pieces between 1750 and 1770, that he was a strolling player; and even Goldsmith was enabled to glean little concerning Parnell. Southerne lived long enough to be enabled himself to contradict the story commonly told, and not yet expunged from some of the biographical dictionaries, of his having been born in England and brought up a servitor at Oxford, instead of being, as he really was, a native of Dublin, and educated at his own expense in her University. And Dr. Johnson has thought proper to consider the birthplace of Swift as in some measure doubtful.

To the list of writers of whom we know less than their reputation deserves, must be added GOLDSMITH. A biographical preface is all that

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has been hitherto awarded him, and it will scarcely be contended that he is unworthy of any thing more. Such sketchy outlines of a life, much of it marked by honourable literary ambition, much of it by daily struggles for daily bread, and parts of it by the imprudences common to such a state of existence, can never be satisfactory, because they must inevitably omit all, or nearly all, that we most wish to know. Biography to be useful must be minute; to be entertaining also it must be minute. Without in short it enters into detail, we can never know much of the individual, or of the private history, often not the least interesting portion of the history of his works; we cannot indulge that rational curiosity which all such persons are calculated to inspire; we cannot trace how his life and his writings bear upon each other; under what particular circumstances the former was passed, and under what incitements or successes, what difficulties or privations, the latter were written. We shall be the more surprised at the neglect in this instance on considering, that almost as soon as he thought proper to affix his name to his productions, it became celebrated; that for several years he occupied, next to Dr. Johnson, perhaps the largest space in the public eye; and even before death took his stand by common consent as a great English classic. No writer, excepting perhaps Voltaire, has written so variously, and, in such departments as he himself selected, so well. He stands alone in our literature for having produced some of the best Poems, one of the best Novels (in the opinion of all foreigners the very best,) many of the best Essays, some of the best Plays, and in the estimate of Dr. Johnson—an opinion which we cannot safely controvert, since for fifty years past popular favour has given them an unbounded circulation—some of the most useful Histories. Strong testimonies to his merits are borne by every competent writer who has had occasion to mention him. Two of these, which in addition to others will be found in the concluding chapter of this work, may be new to the reader, new at least as to the knowledge of who were the authors; one on his prose style being by the late Earl of Dudley, and the other on his poetry by Sir Walter Scott. Both are from the *Quarterly Review*.

That the Life of such a man should not have been written with more regard to extended inquiry, is only to be explained by the circumstances of his situation. He had lived for many years away from his native country; he possessed no connexions, and had formed no domestic ties in that which he had chosen; no relative was at hand even in his dying moments to perform the last offices of humanity, to collect the scattered fragments of his genius, or take that active interest in his fame which in general relatives only feel. His literary friends indeed were numerous and warm; celebrated themselves, and capable of imparting celebrity to others. Some, it appears, were not unwilling to assume the office of biographer, but wanted the necessary knowledge connected with his earlier life, which his relatives only could impart; and they being tardy in collecting and communicating facts, the time had passed by when those for whom the information was intended were able or disposed to follow up their design.

The Poet himself probably expected that his friend Dr. Thomas Percy, afterwards Bishop of Dromore, should have held the pen of biographer, if we may judge from a communication made to that friend on one occasion at Northumberland House. He however, if the design was ever formed, surrendered it to Dr. Johnson for an intended edition of the

Poet's works, as appears by a letter to Mr. Malone, dated June 16th, 1785,* in which the Bishop says—

“I have long owed you my very grateful acknowledgments for a most obliging letter which contained much interesting information, particularly with respect to Goldsmith's Memoirs. The paper which you have recovered in my own handwriting, giving dates and many interesting particulars relating to his life, was dictated to me by himself one rainy day at Northumberland House, and sent by me to Dr. Johnson, which I had concluded to be irrecoverably lost. The other memoranda on the subject were transmitted to me by his brother and others of his family, to afford materials for a life of Goldsmith which Johnson was to write and publish for their benefit. But he utterly forgot them and the subject; so that when he composed Goldsmith's Epitaph he gave a wrong place for that of his birth—*Elphin*,† which is accordingly so sculptured in Westminster Abbey.”

In extenuation of the charge against Dr. Johnson it should be stated, that this seeming neglect of the fame of an old friend, arose from another cause. The copy-right of one of Goldsmith's pieces (*She Stoops to Conquer*) was still the property of Carnan the bookseller (surviving partner of Francis Newbery;) and Carnan being a most impracticable man and at variance with all his brethren, in the words of Malone to the Bishop,‡ he refused his assent, and the project for the time fell to the ground. When his term had expired, it was again resumed by the friends of the poet, with the view of assisting his brother Maurice, then in a state of pecuniary distress. Of this design, the Bishop writes as follows to Malone:—

“Dr. Wilson's very curious letter,§ which you thought lost, I have happily in my possession, so that we may readily compile a good, at least a correct account, of the principal events of Dr. Goldsmith's life; and with the assistance of one or other of his friends, may be able to fill up an account for almost all the time he spent from his leaving Edinburgh till he rose into public notice. He has an only brother living,|| a cabinet-maker, who has been a decent tradesman, a very honest, worthy man, but he has been very unfortunate, and is at this time in great indigence. It has occurred to such of us here (*Dublin*) as were acquainted with the Doctor, to print an edition of his poems, chiefly under the direction of the Bishop of Killaloe and myself, and prefix a new, correct life of the Author, for the poor man's benefit; and to get you, and Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mr. Steevens, &c. to recommend the same in England, especially among the members of *The Club*.”

Proposals were accordingly printed, one of which is in the writer's possession, and two hundred copies transmitted to Malone, through his brother Lord Sunderlin then going to England, for distribution. The volume was to be a quarto, the price a guinea, and a memoir was promised, written from the immediate dictation of the Poet himself; that is

* MS. Correspondence communicated by Dr. H. U. Thompson.

† It was the impression of Malone, in 1778, and probably of the Bishop also, that *Elphin* was the birthplace of Goldsmith; but subsequent information corrected this error, as appears in the memoir prefixed to the miscellaneous works printed in 1801.

‡ MS. letter; Sept. 28th, 1786.

§ Given in a subsequent page of this work, although unaccountably omitted, like many other things, in the memoir prefixed to the miscellaneous works in 1801.

|| The Bishop was not then aware of the younger brother, Charles, being alive in the West Indies.

to say, the memoranda taken down by the Bishop. Malone however proposed a change of plan; he wished that there should be added to the poems, a selection of his prose miscellanies, part of which had been printed with his name, and part were unacknowledged, though known to be his by literary friends, printers, and booksellers: this it was considered would give more variety and novelty to the work.

A Life, however, was to be written; and this the Bishop, although best qualified for the purpose by long intimacy and thorough knowledge of Goldsmith, added to his acknowledged talents, was too busy or too indolent to supply. In compliance with his wish, however, a memoir, now in the possession of the writer, was drawn up by Dr. Thomas Campbell, a native of Glack in the county of Tyrone, Rector of Killisheill, Chancellor of St. Macartin's, Clogher, and author of "A Philosophical Survey of the South of Ireland," and "Strictures on the Ecclesiastical and Literary History of Ireland."* To this outline, for it was merely such, when completed, the Bishop added notes on the blank sides of the pages, which were afterward incorporated into the text, under his direction, by the Rev. Henry Boyd his chaplain, the translator of Dante; and the MS., when placed in the hands of the publishers, between whom and that Prelate an angry disagreement occurred toward the conclusion of their negotiation, received further additions from Mr. Samuel Rose, the friend of Cowper, with which however the Bishop and Malone, as appears by their correspondence now before the writer, were displeased. The memoranda of so many persons, at various times, disjointed in themselves, and thrown together with little regard to method, aimed at no detail, and claimed therefore only the merit of a sketch. No serious attempt was made, when it might have been made with effect from the remembrance of surviving acquaintance, to trace minutely Goldsmith's adventures on the continent of Europe, his early, or indeed later life, in London, or the miscellaneous writings known to have employed his pen in the necessary business of supplying daily wants. Even much of the information which had been communicated to the Bishop was not used, being forgotten or mislaid in the long interval between the first design of publishing in 1785, and its accomplishment in 1801. During this time the subject was frequently agitated in the correspondence of Dr. Percy with Malone, and the latter took much trouble in making arrangements for publication with the booksellers in London.† Still the design lingered; and without casting the slightest reflection where the motives were so praiseworthy, it is too frequently thus with projects merely charitable where some strong personal interest is not present to push us actively forward in their promotion. On this occasion, from the nature of the work, neither fame nor emolument was sought; and without one or the other in view, little of value was ever achieved in literature.

* In a letter to Bishop Percy, Sept. 5, 1790, Dr. Campbell says,—“As to Goldsmith of which you inquire, and concerning which Maurice Goldsmith has been inquiring, it is in such a state that I think I could finish the remainder *currente prelo*.” August 13, 1791—“I cannot bend my sails for England before November. Then I shall take with me all the documents respecting Goldsmith.” February 3, 1792, he asks the Bishop “why he may not print off the first sheets and send the proofs to him at Bath.” June 12, 1793—“I am glad to hear that you have brought the affair of Goldsmith to so good an issue—but, alas! poor Maurice. He is to receive no comfort from your Lordship's labours in his behalf. He departed from a miserable life early last winter, and luckily has left no children.”

† The late Mr. Murray of Fleet-street was first selected for publisher of Goldsmith's Works, but he died during the negotiation. A few letters of Malone to Bishop Percy, still extant, state the circumstances.

The present attempt to rescue from oblivion scattered memorials of the life and productions of this popular Author, owes its origin to the persuasions of an ingenious clerical friend. The writer having had the honour of being elected into the Royal Irish Academy during a residence in his native country in 1830, was desirous of contributing to its Transactions a paper on Goldsmith, derived from some critical remarks made on his writings many years before, and enlarged by such additions in matters of fact as inquiry in Ireland might afford. With this view he wrote to the friend in question,* who is himself a poet, a native of the town nearly adjoining the place of Goldsmith's birth, one of his most ardent admirers, who had endeavoured though without success to acquire more extended information of his earlier life, and who also, by means of a public subscription, attempted in vain to raise a column to his memory on the spot where he was born. This gentleman strongly urged the author of these pages to give, what he said was so much wanted, a Life; he had made the same proposition to him three years before (1827,) which was at once declined; a refusal was again given on its repetition; but a renewal of these friendly persuasions, arising from a very flattering opinion of his diligence, at last induced the writer seriously to think of attempting what might possibly please others, though it might fail to satisfy himself.

The great difficulty was to procure such information as might be new and satisfactory. Of all the distinguished writers of so recent a date, his life, or at least a large portion of it, considering that it offered some curious vicissitudes, was the least accurately known. Not a new fact on the subject, and scarcely one connected with his productions, had transpired for thirty years; no one was known to possess any of his remains; and in the innumerable biographies of literary men and others, published since his death, there was not, with one exception, even a letter of Goldsmith to be found. Material as these obstacles appeared, the design when once determined upon was pursued, it is hoped, with becoming spirit. A journey was undertaken to his native spot; to the subsequent residence of his father at Lissoy; to Athlone; and to Roscommon and its vicinity, where the Poet had spent some time in the house of one of his uncles; communications were entered into with his relatives who were supposed to be capable of communicating information; indeed, all who could be traced were applied to on the subject; and the records of Trinity College searched for such facts as they could supply. With the same view, application was made by the writer to all his literary acquaintance, and removing to London in the following year (1831,) he had the advantage of pursuing there the research that would have proved unavailing elsewhere. In proof that no reasonable diligence was wanting to the completion of an object which he considered more national (to Ireland) than personal, it may be mentioned that several hundreds of letters have been written in furtherance of his inquiries, and personal applications nearly as numerous made to others; while many of the periodical works, and several of the daily journals for a period of

* Rev. John Graham, Rector of Tamlaghtard in the diocess of Londonderry, author of *Annals of Ireland*, *Poems*, *History of the Siege of Londonderry*, &c. &c. In 1822, this gentleman attempted to assemble the gentry of Westmeath and Longford, at a public dinner in Ballymahon, with the view of commencing a subscription for a column to the memory of the Poet; few, however, attended; and this patriotic design failed. Sir Walter Scott offered his contribution.

fifteen years, have been carefully examined by myself, to ascertain the exact dates of the Poet's productions, to trace such others from the same publishers as he did not avow, and to glean all the miscellaneous intelligence they might afford. Much of this was done amid occupations of a public nature, and necessarily cost much time and laborious inquiry. The result, however, has been a large, and it is hoped accurate, accession of information.

One of the obvious duties of a biographer was to discover and to collect, as fully as possible, the scattered productions of his principal; to do that for an admired writer which premature death prevented him doing for himself. The previous attempt to accomplish this object can scarcely be considered serious; no information was given of the principle adopted in the selection, the place whence selected, or the certainty of the pieces so chosen being authentic; it appeared without the sanction of any name; and was not, in fact, as has been stated, the work of any one individual who could be considered accountable for its imperfections. Thus the *Threnodia* and *Ontario* in poetry, and one of the introductions to *Natural History* in prose, though known to Bishop Percy as his, are not even alluded to in the memoir; while some which are mentioned, though of undoubted merit, such as the *Letters of a Nobleman to his Son*, have not the preface and introductory matter included, as in other instances, in the four volumes then published; the effect of the unconnected manner in which that collection was prepared for the press. A new edition of his Works has therefore become necessary; it will include many pieces that were not known to be Goldsmith's until the present writer pursued his researches, and others which the former editor carelessly omitted. This edition, comprised in four volumes, will immediately succeed the present publication.

Very little consideration made it apparent to the Editor, that Goldsmith must have written much which he had not thought proper to acknowledge; but to discover the nature of these labours, few of which from such a hand were likely to be worthless, he was thrown chiefly upon his own resources. Some traditional notices, derived circuitously from his contemporaries, and one or two advertisements in the newspapers shortly after his death, were in the first instance the chief guides; to these much contemporary reading and minute inquiries, added others. The task of investigation proved toilsome and protracted. But a familiar acquaintance with his admitted writings, the habit of comparing them with pieces in periodical works to which he contributed, and with volumes issuing from booksellers by whom he was employed; coincidences of sentiment, repetitions of the same ideas or phraseology, in addition to general resemblance of style, afforded facilities for tracking him with considerable success. Occasionally the writer could satisfy himself by such means, when perhaps he might have been unable to carry similar conviction to the minds of others. But it was not a little satisfactory to find, that the judgment he had passed upon the authenticity of several detached papers from internal evidence only, was confirmed after the lapse of a few years by the discovery of positive testimonies to their authorship. In this manner, many of the productions written for Mr. John Newbery, one of his earlier and active friends, have been placed beyond doubt: these were not all of equal value, and some have not been retained; but it is satisfactory at least to know how, and by whom, he was at particular intervals employed.

Among those to whom the Editor's thanks are due for various communications and attentions during the progress of the work, are the Lord Bishop of Cork, who took the trouble to examine with him the records of Trinity College, Dublin; and the Rev. Dr. Lloyd, the present Provost, and the Rev. Dr. Sadleir the Librarian, who gave him access to the public documents of that university. He is obliged likewise to the Honourable Judge Day, now retiring from the Irish Bench, for a few recollections of his acquaintance with Goldsmith; to the Rev. Dr. Handcock of Dublin, for copies of two original letters; to William R. Mason, Esq., for the perusal of an extensive manuscript correspondence of Dr. Percy, the Bishop of Dromore; to Dr. Neligan, grand nephew of the Poet, and the Rev. Dr. Strean, of Athlone; to Joseph Cooper Walker, Esq., nephew of the author of *Memoirs of the Irish Bards*, for the perusal of letters of the Rev. Thomas Handcock addressed to his uncle respecting the Goldsmith family; to William Crawford, Esq., for two letters of Burke and his college friends bearing upon the subject; to Sir William Betham, Joseph Abbot, Esq., George Kiernan, Esq., and the late lamented Matthew Weld Hartstonge, Esq. for many, and on account of the great difficulty of procuring information, often troublesome, inquiries.

In England he found equal zeal expressed to forward an object which was no sooner mentioned than it excited a lively interest. His obligations are particularly due to Thomas Amyot, Esq. Treasurer of the Antiquarian Society, whose love of letters is only exceeded by a disposition active and friendly in assisting all who are engaged in the pursuit; through him the use of several pieces was procured from the library of the late Mr. Heber. He is likewise much indebted to William Newbery, Esq., for various documents connected with Goldsmith's earlier literary labours for his grandfather, and curious memorials of his life; to Major-General Sir Henry Bunbury, Bart., for copies of verses addressed to his family; to a Lady, his near relative, for her recollections of the Poet; to Dr. H. U. Thomson of Piccadilly, for the use of several letters of Bishop Percy addressed to Malone; to William Nicol, Esq. of Pall Mall, William Upcott, Esq., H. W. Singer, Esq.; and to several others whose names will be found annexed to the information which they had the kindness to communicate.



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L I F E

OF

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

CHAPTER I.

The Goldsmith Family.—Pallas.—Birth of the Poet.—Lissoy.—Schools and Early
Instructors.—Edgworth's Town.

THE family of Goldsmith, Goldsmyth, or, as it was occasionally written, Gouldsmith, is of considerable standing in Ireland, and seems always to have held a respectable station in society. Its origin is English, supposed to be derived from that which was long settled at Crayford, in Kent: in Wood's *Athenæ Oxonienses*, we find some of its members not unknown to literature, and a similarity in the coats of arms appears to confirm this belief. No clear detail of pedigree has been preserved by the Irish branch, willing, as it would seem, even in a country where ancient family sometimes assumes the place of more solid distinctions, to rest their claim to antiquity chiefly on tradition.

One of the earliest settlers in Ireland whose name appears in public documents, was John Goldsmith, who held the office of searcher in the port of Galway, in 1541. His appointment to an office of greater importance, apparently by the request of his superiors, is thus intimated in a king's letter, dated 5th March, 34th of Henry VIII. (1542):—

“We be pleased that John Goldsmyth shall have the roome of the Clerk of our Counsaill, according to your suits and deasires.”

Tradition reports that a female descendant of this gentleman married a Spaniard, named Juan Romeiro, who, travelling in Ireland as the companion of a nobleman of that nation, became enamoured of her, and marrying, settled in the country. His descendants, retaining their mother's name, fixed their abode in the province of Connaught and on its borders, particularly in the counties of Roscommon, Westmeath, and Longford, where something more than a century ago many traces of the Goldsmiths existed which are now swept away. With the maternal name, they likewise preserved her

religious faith; one or more of the members have been usually brought up to the church, whence it has been designated a clerical family; and one of these, the Rev. John Goldsmith, rector of Borris-houle, in the county of Mayo, narrowly escaped the effects of the savage animosity engendered against the thinly scattered Protestant population at the breaking out of the Rebellion in 1641.

From his statement upon oath before the parliamentary commissioners, it appears that, in the consternation produced by the massacres of their brethren in the vicinity of Castlebar, the survivors, to the number of sixty, including Sir Henry Bingham, the Bishop of Killala, and fifteen clergymen, became anxious for safe conduct to the town of Galway, which was promised by the "lord of Mayo," Viscount Bourke, a Roman Catholic. Accompanied by the titular archbishop, he conveyed them as far as Shrute: here they were handed over to one Edmond, or Captain, Bourke, a relative of the peer; but the latter had no sooner departed than a general massacre commenced by order of their conductor. Few of the unfortunate men escaped; but among these was Mr. Goldsmith, who, being esteemed by the Viscount, had just before been detached, no doubt for the purpose of saving his life, to attend upon the Viscountess, a Protestant; and by this means was saved from the melancholy fate which awaited many others.*

A son, as is said, of this gentleman, probably in compensation for the losses of his father or for previous services of his own, secured after the Restoration a grant originally assigned to him before the civil war, in the following terms:—"George Goldsmith, and Hester his wife, and their heirs, such right in law and equity in Kilbegg and Brackughreagh, lands situate in the Barony of Moycashell, county of Westmeath, as was decreed to them 4th August, 1633."

Edward, the son of the latter, was educated in Trinity College,† Dublin, and taking holy orders, became Dean of Elphin in July, 1700, with the vicarages of Ardcarne, Eastersnow, and Kilmactrany, and died in 1722. His son, the Rev. Isaac Goldsmith,‡ also educated at Trinity College, was promoted to the Deanery of Cloyne in 1736, to which, from its poverty (for deaneries in Ireland by no means imply wealth,) was added the small prebends of Kilmally and Lesclarey. He died in 1769.

Another son of the Rector of Borrishoule, named John, educated for the church, believed to have been at one time a fellow of Trinity College, and who afterwards enjoyed the living of Newtown, in the county of Meath, married Jane, only daughter of Robert Madden, of Dunore, in the county of Dublin, Esq., by whom he had issue, Robert, John, and Jane. John is believed to have died unmarried;

* History of the Irish Rebellion, by Sir John Temple, 4to. 1698, p. 107.

† The following entry is from the College Register:—"1677, Junii decimo quinto —Edwardus Goldsmith pensionarius—filius Georgii Goldsmith annos quindecim —natus () Educatus sub ferula ()—Tutor Nat. Fay."

‡ 1720, Julii die secundo—Isaacus Goldsmith pensionarius—Filius Edwardi Decani Elphin—Annum agens decimum quartum—Natus Elfin—Educatus Carrick sub Magistro Manby—Tutor Magister Hamilton.

Jane married first Robert Woods, of Lakon, in the county of Sligo, and secondly, Edward Muns, of Ussy, in the county of Roscommon, by whom she had issue, Edward and Jane.

Robert, the elder son and grandfather to the poet, who seems to have exercised no profession, married Catherine, daughter of Thomas Crofton, D. D., dean of Elphin, and settled at Ballyoughter, near the residence of his father-in-law; and Dr. Edward Goldsmith, his relative already mentioned, being afterwards promoted to the same deanery, the branches of the family were thus brought together. By this lady, who enjoyed a moderate fortune, he had a family of thirteen children, nine sons and four daughters. Of this numerous progeny, which through mistake of his early biographers was given to the father instead of the grandfather of the poet, several died young; John, the elder, who had been educated at Trinity College* preparatory to studying for the bar, afterwards relinquishing thoughts of that profession, settled on the family property at Ballyoughter where Oliver once was an inmate, and where his talents were first supposed to be discerned.

Such is the account of the more remote connexions of Goldsmith, derived from various sources† after considerable research; but where the individual has interested us, the illustration of family history becomes a matter of reasonable curiosity. He himself was accustomed to say that by the female side he was remotely connected with the family of the Protector, Oliver Cromwell, from whom his Christian name was derived. By the father's side he claimed affinity with General Wolfe, the conqueror of Quebec, whose mother, Henrietta Goldsmith, as well as her husband, it would appear from some circumstances, were natives of Ireland.‡

Charles, the second son of Robert and father of the Poet, brought up to the sacred profession, passed through Trinity College with credit,§ and is said by his son to have had, as well as his uncle John, some knowledge of the poet Parnell.|| To the former this acquaint-

* "1697, Sep. 23^o. *Johannes Goldsmith Pensio* :—*Filius Roberti Goldsmith generosi*—*Annum agens* 18—*Natus villa dicta Ballioughter Com : Roscommon*—*Educatus Stroakstown sub Mago. Cugh*—*Tutor Eu : Loyd*."

† For several particulars, I am indebted to the kindness of my friend Sir William Betham, Ulster King of Arms.

‡ In the obituaries of the time, this lady is mentioned as aunt to Edward Goldsmith, Esq., of Limerick, a promising young man, who died in 1764. Of the regard of this lady for the true interests of Ireland, the following is a proof: "On Friday, the executors of the late Mrs. Henrietta Wolfe, mother of the late brave General Wolfe, paid the legacy of 1000*l*. left by her to the Incorporated Society in Dublin, for promoting the English Working Schools in Ireland." *Lloyd's Evening Post*, May, 27—29, 1765.

In an Irish obituary for 1771 is mentioned the death of Major Walter Wolfe, uncle to the General, who had served under Marlborough, and to whose early and judicious instructions, it is said his nephew was indebted for much of his knowledge of the art of war.

§ "1707, *Carolus Goldsmith Pens.*—*Filius Rob* :—*Ann : ag : 17*—*Natus prope Elphin*—*Educ : ibid. sub Dno. Griffith*—*Tutor Joh. Weatherby*."

|| "1690. 25^o. *die Novembris*—*Thomas Parnell Pensionarius*—*Filius Thomae Parnell Armigeri*—*Annum agens decimum tertium*—*Natus Dublinii*—*Educatus ibidem sub Magistro Jones*—*Tutor Eu. Lloyd*."

ance may have occurred at a later period, or by College tradition, for they were not contemporaries; but his uncle John was there for a portion of the same time and under the same tutor. His father, it likewise appears, enjoyed the acquaintance of Thomas, grandfather of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, who was of the same standing in the University, having entered it the 18th of October, 1707.

The Rev. Charles Goldsmith is represented to have first filled a curacy in the diocese of Dublin, and afterwards of a place of which there is no satisfactory account, probably from an error in orthography, but supposed Dusham or Duneham. These appear to have been but temporary employments, for he was without occupation, when, in 1718, he married Ann, daughter of the Rev. Oliver Jones, master of the diocesan school at Elphin, where he had received his preliminary education, and where the attachment commenced. This union was not approved by the friends of either; he was destitute of the means of providing for a family, and the father of his wife having a son and three other daughters to provide for, her portion was small. As some support however became necessary for the young couple, the Rev. Mr. Green, uncle to Mrs. Goldsmith and rector of the parish of Kilkenny West, provided them a house about six miles distant from himself, at a place called Pallas, in the adjoining county of Longford. Here they took up their abode, and continued for a period of twelve years; Mr. Goldsmith officiating partly in the church of his uncle, and partly in that of the parish in which he resided.

In the more remote districts of Ireland, the necessities of life being cheap, come within reach of a small income; homeliness was then and is occasionally now characteristic of the country; what are called the comforts of life in England, were not in the sister kingdom sought by many who possessed nevertheless means of procuring them; and to this early familiarity with what many would consider privation, may be ascribed that indifference to it remarked of the Poet in future life. Mr. Charles Goldsmith, besides the emoluments of his profession and the contributions of his friends, supported an increasing family, by renting some land in the vicinity upon which his leisure hours were employed. His first permanent support appears to have been a gift from his mother-in-law of fifty acres of land, procured at a nominal rent by the exertion of that address which an Irish tenant sometimes plays off upon a necessitous landlord; and the story is still told by her descendants. The heading of one of the leases still in existence, of the date July 30th, 1729, between William Conolly, Esq., one of the Lords Justices, &c. &c. and Ann Jones, &c. runs thus:—"To have and to hold —, in and during the natural lives of — and Ann Goldsmith, wife of the Rev. Charles Goldsmith of Pallacemore, in the county of Longford, clerk, one of the daughters of the said Ann Jones," &c. &c.*

* The activity and spirit displayed by this lady on the occasion of procuring the lease are thus mentioned by Mr. Jones Lloyd, proprietor of Smithhill, or Ardngowan, her great grandson :

Pallas, or Pallasmore, that is the greater or highest Pallas, in the parish of Forgany or Forney, in the county of Longford, consists of an ordinary farm-house or two; and in a direct line, is about a mile and a half from the town of Ballymahon, though by the road, which is circuitous, double that distance. It lies to the south-east of Newcastle a seat of the Countess Dowager of Rosse, and being on a rising ground, overlooks on one side a low tract of country occasionally flooded by the river Inny; a stream which in passing Ballymahon in its course to the Shannon, assumes a very picturesque appearance. The road to Pallas leads past Forney church: here it turns to the left, and after proceeding more than a mile, takes a second abrupt turn also to the left by a lane, which if the traveller have resolution to traverse will lead to the object of his pursuit. This place was visited on a fine day in December; but rocky inequalities of the lane in some parts and deep sloughs in others, rendered it inaccessible to the usual conveyance, a jaunting car: even the common rough country cars find a portion of it difficult, and the remainder defies any wheeled vehicle whatever. The route to the house was therefore pursued on foot; and after a fatiguing walk through fields and over hedges, the spot was at length reached, but it is feared with many poetical associations subdued by the uncivilised nature of the approach.

At Pallas, OLIVER GOLDSMITH was born, on the 10th of November, 1728; the house however in which it took place has been long levelled to the ground. By the present occupier of the farm, a squalid-looking though it is said opulent person for his class, we were informed that little more than its foundation remained when he first became tenant, about forty years before; and as may be supposed, even that is now obliterated. He pointed out a portion of its wall overgrown with grass, forming a part of the fence of the orchard. To several questions he replied, that it had been, as he was told, a "good country house," the front looking toward Forney church; and he had heard that Oliver Goldsmith, the poet, was born in the best bed-room, which looked in the same direction. These details were confirmed by others. Afterwards it would appear this house became the residence of a branch of the Edgeworth family,*

"The Rev. Oliver Jones had rented a considerable tract of land from Mr. Conolly, one of the lords justices of the kingdom, which at the death of the former fell out of lease, and the widow was told she could not have a renewal. Not dispirited by this intimation, she determined to try her personal influence, and undertook, what was then thought an unusual effort for a woman, a journey to Dublin. No public conveyance existed; the roads were in a most wretched state; but, mounting a pillion behind her son on horseback, proceeded in this manner to the metropolis. The whole of the lands were refused to her application; but having, as a final argument, judiciously provided herself with one hundred guineas, she once more urged her suit to the landlord, and in addition to her solicitations displayed the gold before him. This had its due effect: necessity has ever been master in Ireland: and the temptation was sufficient to procure a fresh lease of *half* the lands on the same easy terms as before. She used jocularly to regret that she had not taken another hurt with her, and thus secured the whole. The journey, however, in consequence of a hurt, cost her the life of her son."

* In an Irish Magazine (Exshaw's, for 1770) there is the following announcement

whose property the land still continues. Few persons now visit it from curiosity, partly from being little known, partly from the difficulties of the road; for to ladies and delicate or infirm persons it is nearly inaccessible; only one gentleman, as the farmer said, had ventured to explore it the preceding summer. The attention of literary pilgrims has been rather directed to Lissoy on the high road to Athlone, which became the subsequent residence of Mr. Goldsmith, and offered no difficulties of approach.

An amusing tradition respecting this house was repeated to us by a neighbouring magistrate. When from neglect and want of an occupier the roof first fell in, attempts made to repair it were continually thwarted by the hostility of an ill-looking, (for the peasantry are minute in their descriptions on such occasions.) powerful, supernatural personage accoutred in huge boots, who amused himself nightly in bestriding the roof as he would a horse, and by mimicking the motion of riding, pushed his legs through it and sometimes through the upper floor, thus rendering all attempts at reparation unavailing. The reason assigned for these pranks was as fanciful as the story. Being on a rising ground, in a retired part of the country and in the vicinity of water, it was favourable for the resort of the "good people," or Fairies, during their midnight sports, who if the house became habitable would have had their privacy boken in upon; these means were therefore taken by this feared though imaginary race of beings to keep off intruders. It is perhaps in the natural order of things, that the spot where an admired poet first drew breath, should be the scene of popular fiction.

The place of his birth, notwithstanding the statement of his nearest relatives, is still disputed with considerable heat in the different districts which claim it; and the province of Connaught particularly deems her honour concerned in the struggle. The rival counties are Leitrim, Roscommon, Westmeath, and Longford; rather more than half the number of places which contended for the honour of having the father of poetry one of their fellow citizens—

*Septem urbes certant de stirpe insignis Homeri,
Smyrna, Rhodes, Colophon, Salamis, Chios, Argos, Athenæ.*

The claim of Leitrim has never been esteemed valid; it is confined to the towns of Drumsna and Carrick-on-Shannon, where Goldsmith had relatives residing and which he occasionally visited in early life. That of Westmeath is equally objectionable, being merely entered in the admission book of Trinity College as the then residence of his father. Ardnagan, Ardnagowan, or in correct Celtic orthography as it is said* *Airdnagabha*, near Elphin, the abode of his grandfather Jones, contests the matter more vigorously; and here, were his early biographers to be trusted, we should assign

of birth—"The wife of Francis White Edgeworth, Esq., of *Pallasmore, Co. of Longford*, of a son."

* By the Rev. Dr. Streaton of Athlone, to whom I feel obliged for the inquiries he has made.

his birth. Mr. Jones Lloyd, its present possessor, descended from another daughter of the Rev. Mr. Jones, points out from the information of his grandmother, the room and even the precise part of the room, where the Poet by this account first saw the light. At present this apartment forms the dairy, though at that time one of the principal in a house second only to that of the bishop of the diocese, and since considerably enlarged; and the confinement of Mrs. Goldsmith is stated to have occurred unexpectedly during a visit to her mother. No corroboration can be obtained of this story: the relater of it being about the same age as the Poet, could not herself be acquainted with the fact, while stronger testimony elsewhere satisfactorily disproves her statement. But as eminence commonly begets admirers and singularity is supposed to attend uncommon events, it was necessary perhaps to make the Poet peculiar even in his birth; and unlike the other children of the family, have his nativity assigned not to the house of his father, but to another which gratified a little family pride by being of more importance.

A document has been lately recovered which sets the matter at rest. This is the leaf of the family Bible in which the marriage of Mr. and Mrs. Goldsmith and the births of their children are recorded, now in the possession of Dr. Neligan of Athlone, great grand-nephew of the poet, from which the following transcript was made by his permission during a visit to that town in 1830. The marginal portion of the leaf being unluckily worn away by age, the two last figures of the century in which Henry, Jane, and Oliver were born are thus lost; the age of the Poet is, however, sufficiently ascertained by the recollection of his sister, and by his calling himself when writing from London in 1759, thirty-one. The year of his birth is therefore 1728.

“Charles Goldsmith of Ballyoughter was married to Mrs. Ann Jones y^e 4th of May 1728.

“Margaret Goldsmith was born at Pallismore in the county of Longford y^e 22^d August 1719.

“Catherine Goldsmith born at Pallas y^e 13th January 1721.

“Henry Goldsmith was born at Pallas Febr^y 9th 17 .

“Jane Goldsmith was born at Pallas Febr^y 9th 17 .

“Oliver Goldsmith was born at Pallas November y^e 10th 17 .

“Maurice Goldsmith was born at Lissoy in y^e county Westmeath y^e seventh of July 1736.

“Charles Goldsmith jun^r born at Lishoy Aug^t 16th 1737.

“John Goldsmith born at Lishoy* y^e 23^d of (month obliterated) 1740.”

This paper corrects some errors into which Mrs. Hodson, elder

* The reader will observe many variations in orthography; thus, Lissoy or Lishoy are used as the whim of the moment prompts; thus also we have Pallas, Pallasmore, Pallismore, and Pallacemore, all meaning the same place; and the family of Hodson near Athlone, into which the Poet's sister Catherine married, is now by their own relatives called and spelt Hodson or Hudson indiscriminately; the latter indeed most commonly. Few things perplex an inquirer in Ireland more than these needless and arbitrary variations.

sister of the Poet, from trusting to memory, had fallen, in the account of her brother furnished to Bishop Percy. His birthday is there stated to be the 29th of November, instead of the date here assigned: Henry is also said to be eight years his senior,—an error probably repeated from seeing it in one of the Poet's letters, though the interval could not have been more than six years if so much; and a space of eight years, stated to have occurred between the birth of the previous child and Oliver, really took place between the latter and the succeeding son, Maurice.

About the year 1730, Mr. Goldsmith, by the death of his wife's uncle, succeeded to the Rectory of Kilkenny West. He removed at the same time to Lissoy, a respectable house and farm on the verge of a small village standing in his own parish, on the right of the road leading from Ballymahon to Athlone, and about midway between these towns. It was neither a glebe house, nor did he, as is sometimes said, build it; but the lively interest which this spot has excited, as well in his native country as wherever the "Deserted Village" is read, as the supposed scene portrayed in the poem, added to the numerous inquiries made even in Ireland whether such a village as Auburn exists, or was really deserted, make some further notice of this spot necessary.

Lissoy, in that scarce volume giving an account of the forfeited estates in Ireland, would appear to have been a species of personal property of James II. It was sold, or at least such portion of it as he claimed, amounting to 121 acres, in 1708, to Captain Richard Newstead of Westmeath, for 421*l.*, the annual rent of the then tenant in possession, Robert Temple, Esq., being 29*l.*; it is described as consisting of arable and pasture land, with the further recommendation of having a "good sheep-walk." Soon after the removal of Mr. Goldsmith thither, he procured a lease from the purchaser (Newstead) of about 70 acres of this land, at the rent of eight shillings an acre, renewable for ever on the payment of half a year's rent for every new life introduced, the first lives being those of himself, his eldest son Henry, and daughter Catherine, afterwards Mrs. Hodson.* This property remained in the family till 1802, when it was sold by Mr. Henry Goldsmith, then in America, son of the above-named Henry the clergyman and of whom an account will afterwards appear, to Mr. Bond, a connexion of the family by marriage, in whose possession it remains.

The identity of Lissoy with the scene of the poem, in the general belief of the people of the vicinity, is corroborated by an anecdote told by a traveller some years ago in the United States.

"'The Deserted Village,' said he (Mr. Best, an Irish clergyman, is the speaker,) relates to the scenes in which Goldsmith was an actor. Auburn is a poetical name for the village of Lissoy in the

* An abstract of this deed, dated January 28th, 1731, may be seen in the Register Office, Dublin; also a second, dated September 1742, fixing the sum of 26*l.* as the annual rent of the lands in question, to prevent dispute respecting the amount of rent, the lease having specified certain boundaries, rather than the precise number of acres.

county of Westmeath, barony of Kilkenny West. The name of the schoolmaster was Paddy Burns. I remember him well. He was, indeed, a man severe to view. A woman called Walsey Cruse kept the alehouse—

‘Imagination fondly stoops to trace
The parlour splendours of that festive place.’

I have been often in the house. The hawthorn-bush was remarkably large, and stood opposite the alehouse. I was once riding with Brady, titular Bishop of Ardagh, when he observed to me, ‘Ma foy,* Best, this huge overgrown bush is mightily in the way; I will order it to be cut down.’ ‘What, sir!’ said I, ‘cut down Goldsmith’s hawthorn-bush, that supplies so beautiful an image in the *Deserted Village*!’ ‘Ma foy!’ exclaimed the Bishop, ‘is that the hawthorn-bush? Then ever let it be sacred from the edge of the axe, and evil to him that would cut from it a branch!’†

An anecdote connected with this subject, and of which further notice will occur, requires to be mentioned here. In November, 1738, a part of the townland of Lissoy, and the adjoining lands of Cannorstown to the number of 600 acres, were sold by “Jeffrey French, Esq. of the Middle Temple,” to the “Honourable Robert Naper lieutenant-general of his Majesty’s forces in Ireland,” for the sum of £3,300; but the General appears to have died before the purchase was completed. Upon this property, named Ballybegg, lying behind the house of Mr. Goldsmith, about half a mile distant, Mr. William Naper, son of the General, several years afterwards built the family residence named Littleton. In the preliminary arrangements, some circumstances probably neither harsh nor unjust in themselves connected with the removal of part of the tenantry, gave rise in the mind of Goldsmith, morbidly acute in his benevolent feelings and particularly towards the poorer classes of society, to the idea of the “*Deserted Village*.” Proprietary rights cannot always be exercised by landlords in Ireland, even in a reasonable manner, without extreme jealousy on the part of the people. Circumstances therefore which occur daily in England, and produce neither censure nor notice, excite in the former loud complaint, if not open hostility. Any thing resembling severity becomes speedily known and loudly censured; and such impressions, however untrue, taken up and acted upon by the imagination and eloquence of a poet, are dangerous assailants of reputation. An attack in simple prose may be answered, and seldom long survives the period of contention; but embalmed in verse, the supposed misdeeds of an offender may endure as long as the language.‡

* The Irish Roman Catholic Clergy were then all educated in France, and in language and manners were often more French than Irish.

† Davis’s *Travels in the United States of America*, p. 113.

‡ It may amuse the political economist to know the different opinions then entertained of the influence of peace and war upon the value of landed property. In a lease, dated March 1744, from the above-named William Naper to Gerald Dillon, of 141 acres of the land around Ballybegg (adjoining Lissoy), it is stipulated,

The house once occupied by the rector of Kilkenny West, pleasantly situated and of good dimensions, is now a ruin, verifying the truth of the pathetic lines of his son—

“Vain transitory splendours ! Could not all
Relieve the tottering mansion from its fall !”

The front, including a wing, extends, as nearly as could be judged by pacing it, sixty-eight feet by a depth of twenty-four ; it consisted of two stories, with five windows in each. The roof has been off for a period of twenty years ; the gable ends remain, but the front and back walls of the upper story have crumbled away, and if the hand of the destroyer be not stayed, will soon wholly disappear. Two or three wretched cottages for labourers, surrounded by mud, adjoin it on the left. Behind the house is an orchard of some extent and the remains of a garden, both utterly neglected. In front, a pretty avenue of double rows of ash trees, which formed the approach from the high road, about sixty yards distant, and at one time presented an object of interest to travellers, has, like every other trace of care or superintendence, disappeared—cut down by the ruthless hand of some destroyer. No picture of desolation can be more complete. As if an image of the impending ruin had been present, the Poet has painted with fearful accuracy what his father's house was to be—

“Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,
And still where many a garden flower grows wild ;
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,
The Village Preacher's modest mansion rose.”

And we contemplate the realization of the melancholy scene as we do the poem of the unfortunate Falconer, who, while singing the story of one shipwreck, scarcely conceived he was fated to perish by a second.

A visiter to this spot will be tempted to believe, from the ignorance he finds among many of the neighbouring peasantry, that little enthusiasm exists regarding the name of him who nevertheless gives it all its importance. We found some unexpected instances of this. In Ireland the legend of a saint, or of a miracle, is universally familiar and never forgotten ; but not so the memorials of her distinguished men. These have too often passed away with contemporary generations. Nor are the middling and upper classes exempt from the charge of neglecting what it should be their first ambition affectionately to cherish. It is not that they are indifferent to the fame of their celebrated countrymen, but we require more obvious proofs of the fact ; it is in the public statue and the column, that their professions of admiration should be brought to the test of performance.

In the homely village, standing a few hundred yards from the house, a spirit of veneration for the memory of Goldsmith has been

that *eight shillings* an acre rent shall be paid during the war between Great Britain and Spain, and *ten shillings* during peace.

fostered by a neighbouring gentleman,* who has used all his influence to preserve from the ravages of time and passing depredators, such objects and localities as serve to mark allusions in the poem. Many of these are pointed out with sufficient resemblance to confirm an opinion, of which more extended notice will hereafter occur, of the Poet having this spot in view when engaged in its composition. Nothing could be more natural, in sketching rural character and scenery, than to look back on such as delighted his youth, and thence most forcibly impressed his memory.

At Lissoy, Oliver, when about three years old, was given in charge of his first instructress : she was a relative, resident in the family, who by marriage with a neighbouring farmer became afterwards known as Elizabeth Delap, and died about 1787. In the decline of life she kept a small school in the village, and took pride in speaking to visitors of her former office. "I should have observed," writes Dr. Streat, now rector of Athlone, who was eighteen years curate of this parish, "that Elizabeth Delap, who was a parishioner of mine, and died at the age of about ninety, often told me she was the first who put a book into Goldsmith's hands; by which she meant, that she taught him his letters. She was allied to him, and kept a little school."

"Within the last three years," says the Rev. Thomas Handcock, in a letter to Joseph Cooper Walker, Esq., of Dublin, for whom he was making inquiries on this subject in 1790, "I was called, in the absence of a neighbouring clergyman, to visit an old woman at Lissoy (the real name of the place, Auburn,) and, almost with her last breath, she boasted to me of being the first person who had put a book into Goldsmith's hands."†

The characteristics of his mind in infancy, according to the account of Mrs. Delap, were not promising. She admitted he was one of the dullest boys ever placed under her charge, and doubted, for some time, whether any thing could be made of him; or, in the words used by Mr. Handcock, he seemed "impenetrably stupid." Dr. Streat gleaned some remembrances to the same effect. "He was considered," says that gentleman, "by his contemporaries and school-fellows, with whom I have often conversed on the subject, as a stupid, heavy blockhead, little better than a fool, whom every one made fun of."

To another inquirer, a Mr. Daly, who had collected some particulars of his early life, and who died in France early in the Revolution,‡ her accounts were rather more favourable. She confessed he

* John Hogan, Esq., who, succeeding to an estate in the neighbourhood, built a pretty house on the opposite side of the road, named after the scene of the poem, Auburn; not the poem, as some seem to imagine, called after the house. This gentleman's zeal deserves every praise; and the more, perhaps, because it has not been imitated in the neighbourhood.

† MS. Correspondence, communicated by J. C. Walker, Esq., of Dublin, nephew to the author of "Memoirs of the Irish Bards."

‡ Known to the late Dr. M'Veagh M'Donnell, of Orchard Street, Portman Square, a protégé of Goldsmith, of whom some account will hereafter be given. Mr. Daly communicated to that gentleman several particulars of his former patron,

was very young at the time; that he was docile, diffident, easily managed, and that his inaptitude for retaining his lessons might have arisen from the carelessness common to all children. Such circumstances are no otherwise worthy of notice, than merely for the gratification of curiosity; they indicate nothing. He is a bold speculator who draws decided inferences of what the man is to be, from the casual peculiarities of the mere child.

At the age of about six years he was turned over to the care of the village schoolmaster, Thomas Byrne, a person characterized by many points of originality, had the Poet thought fit to sketch him at length. He had been educated for the profession he now followed; but, enlisting into the army, went with it to the Continent, and rose to be quartermaster of a regiment serving in Spain during the reign of Queen Anne. When reduced on the conclusion of peace, he returned to his original calling of an instructor of youth. His attainments were more than sufficient for all he professed to teach, which, in the want of more advanced scholars, were confined to reading, writing, and arithmetic; and the observations on manners and character furnished by the life of a soldier, set off to advantage such knowledge as he had gleaned from books.

He is represented to have been eccentric in his habits, unsettled in disposition, of a romantic turn, wrote poetry, was well versed in the fairy superstitions of the country, and, what is not less common in Ireland, believed implicitly in their truth. He could likewise, according to the accounts of a few of his scholars who were living about 1790, given to the Rev. Mr. Handcock, "translate extemporaneously Virgil's Eclogues into Irish verse, of, at least, equal elegance."* Not the least of his qualifications was the art of narrating his adventures in a manner to fix the attention and curiosity of his neighbours, and the scene of these narratives was commonly the alehouse. In the school, also, when indisposed to teach a lesson, he would often tell a story; and among the most eager listeners on such occasions was young Goldsmith, whose imagination appears to have been so much excited by what he heard, as to induce his friends to attribute to this cause, that wandering and unsettled turn which distinguished part of his future life.

Under the tuition of Byrne he made no material progress; a dawning of natural powers, indeed, appeared, which relatives are happy to see and proud to record; he began to write puerile rhymes, and destroyed them as fast as they were written: but the usual school acquirements, either from defective memory or application, scarcely kept pace with those of other boys. The seeming activity of imagination exhibited by his verses made a strong impression upon his mother, who early began to believe that he was destined to make some figure in the world. His temper at this time, by the account of Mrs. Hodson, though peculiar, was kind and affectionate; his

and believed he had discovered a few of his minor poetical pieces, of which notice will be taken in a future page.

* MS. Letter to the late Joseph Cooper Walker, Esq.

manner, for the most part, uncommonly serious and reserved, but, when in gay humour, none more cheerful and agreeable. In these words she has described her brother as he afterwards appeared to his acquaintance in London; solemn and yet gay, good-natured and yet irritable, petulant sometimes, and instantly appeased by the smallest concession; so that such as did not understand, or inquire into, the occasional peculiarities of genius, were puzzled by this contrariety of disposition; and the remark is even preserved, that he seemed to possess "two natures."*

One of the causes alleged for his backwardness was devoted attachment to the fictions and marvellous stories which make so much of the amusement of children in all places, and of which Ireland has a more than ordinary store. He read with avidity; but the selection then and till a very recent period found in the village schools, cottages, and houses occupied by persons even above the class of peasantry in Ireland, was of the worst kind. His understanding or morals could derive no benefit from the perusal of such stories as the *History of the Irish Rogues and Rapparees*—*Lives of celebrated Pirates*—*History of Moll Flanders*—of *Jack the Bachelor*, (a notorious Smuggler,) of *Fair Rosamond* and *Jane Shore*—of *Donna Rozena, the Spanish Courtesan*—the *Life and Adventures of James Freney*, a famous Irish Robber, and others of a similar description, then the principal books of amusement for boys at school.† Whatever were their studies, a singular negligence existed as to their lighter stores of reading; no apprehension seems to have been entertained of the danger likely to arise from familiarizing the minds of youth with tales of robbery and impurity; and it is to the credit of the people, that morals have not been materially vitiated by the introduction of such improper publications into their hands.

Another favourite occupation was in listening to the ballads of the peasantry, which, as may be conceived, made so strong an impression, that he could repeat and sing several to the latest period of life. Of these, and of fairy tales and superstitions, the stock in Ireland is so abundant, or the people possess so fertile an imagination for their invention, that in the rural districts few are at a loss to furnish their share for the amusement of a winter fireside.‡ Telling tales is to others a profession; who travel the country in default of more steady modes of industry and find refreshment and a ready audience

* Sir John Hawkins's *Life of Dr. Johnson*; T. Davies's *Life of Garrick*.

† To this catalogue of what has been termed sarcastically the *Cottage Classics of Ireland*, and most of which the writer has seen in the hands of the peasantry, a friend who entered a cottage in the county of Clare a few years ago, and transcribed on the spot a list of their books, added the following: *Ovid's Art of Love*—*The Devil and Dr. Faustus*—*Parismus and Parismenus*—*History of Witches and Ghosts*—*Montelea, Knight of the Oracle*—*Seven Champions of Christendom*—*Mendoza's Art of Boxing*; and, the only good volumes, several spelling books.

‡ My friend Mr. Crofton Croker's volumes form admirable specimens of the ingenuity and abundance of these fictions in the south of Ireland. In the north they are scarcely less numerous, and a harvest may probably be reaped there, by such as can devote time and diligence to the pursuit.

in farm houses to hear such wonders as they have gleaned from memory, or by invention. To these legends Goldsmith is reported to have paid anxious attention; their effects were judged by his occasional reference in future life to fictions so wild and improbable. Such accidental circumstances are sometimes said to make poets; they may serve perhaps to strengthen an imagination already poetical, but could they create the race, Ireland and Scotland would boast a numerous offspring.

An attack of confluent small-pox, which had nearly deprived him of life, and left traces of its ravages in his face ever after, first caused him to be taken from under the care of Byrne. And a superior master being now necessary, he was removed, on final recovery, to the same school of Elphin, in Roscommon, once superintended by his grandfather, but then under the management of the Rev. Mr. Griffin. Here he entered on a superior class of studies; he became, likewise, an inmate of his uncle, Mr. John Goldsmith of Ballyoughter in the vicinity, and soon exhibited such evidences of talent as to be considered by that gentleman and his family a boy of the most promising kind. This opinion became strengthened from a variety of trifling incidents; among others, by the following instances of prompt wit, which they took care should be known to his parents: Mrs. Hodson told the one, and Mrs. Johnston, another of his sisters, related the other.

A company of young persons having assembled to dance in the house of Mr. Goldsmith, one of the party, a youth named Cumming, a proficient on the violin, was requested to play, while Oliver, who ever continued fond of the amusement of dancing, displayed his skill in a hornpipe. The effects of the late disease on his face, added to a short and thick figure, led the musician to hold him up to youthful ridicule as a personation of *Æsop*; and the jest proving a source of merriment, the object of it at length stopped short in the dance, and triumphantly turned the laugh against his persecutor, by pronouncing the following distich—

“Our herald hath proclaimed this saying,
See *Æsop* dancing and his monkey playing,”

A retort so sharp and ready may seem above the usual capacity of a boy nine or ten years old. Something of our admiration, however, may abate, when we consider that *Æsop* probably formed one of his school books, and that some boyish verses, for they bear no proofs of a maturer age, lingering in his recollection, may have been altered to suit the purpose of the moment in gratifying juvenile resentment.

The other instance recorded of his quickness of repartee was connected with a male relative, whose imprudences had been the subject of conversation in the family. Calling at Mr. Goldsmith's, he found Oliver in the room, and desiring him to come forward, examined his face playfully, pronouncing in a strain of banter, “Why, Noll, you are become a fright; when do you mean to get handsome

again?" Annoyed by the reproach, the object of it retreated to the window without reply; when, in order to punish what was deemed a fit of sulkiness, the question was sneeringly repeated. The boy in the meantime meditated an answer, and seizing an opportunity of escape from his persecutor, called out archly as he retreated, "I mean to get better, Sir, when you do." It may diminish our admiration of precocious wit, to know that he was at this time a year or two older than Mrs. Hodson represents.

His destination hitherto had been a mercantile life. The confined circumstances of his father and the expense to be incurred in giving the elder son, Henry, a university education for which he was now preparing at an eminent classical school in Longford, precluded the hope of similar advantages for the second. The proofs he exhibited of superior intelligence pleaded strongly for every effort that could be made towards such an end; his mother earnestly seconded it, and his relatives promised their aid in contributing to the expense. As the first step towards it, he was sent about 1739 to a school of repute in Athlone, about five miles from his father's house, kept by the Rev. Mr. Campbell. It has been said that he exhibited no predilection for this change of destination, which was rather submitted to than sought; and in mature life, before he had attained to fame, he estimated the advantages of learning to boys generally, lower than might have been expected. "A boy," he says, writing to his brother Henry in 1759 from London, "who understands perfectly well Latin, French, arithmetic, and the principles of the civil law, and can write a fine hand, has an education that may qualify him for any undertaking." To the praises he received for supposed displays of early talent, as recorded in the preceding stories, the following passage in an essay on education no doubt refers:—

"Every species of flattery should be carefully avoided. A boy who happens to say a sprightly thing is generally applauded so much, that he continues a coxcomb all his life after. He is reputed a wit at fourteen, and becomes a blockhead at twenty. Nurses, footmen, and such, should therefore be driven away as much as possible. I was even going to add, that the mother herself should stifle her pleasure or her vanity, when little master happens to say a good or a smart thing."

At Athlone he continued about two years; when the master, who bore the character of an ingenious man, resigning his charge on account of ill health, Oliver was removed to the school of the Rev. Patrick Hughes, of Edgeworthstown in the county of Longford, where he remained till his entrance into the University. The traces of him here, as may be supposed from the lapse of time, are few. Accident must commonly contribute to the preservation of such frail memorials. The trifling events of what is considered a trifling period of life acquire importance only when the actors have risen into celebrity, and when the world becomes anxious to trace in the boy evidences of the future man,—to know how he thought, and studied, and acted; but such information is commonly sought when it is most difficult to be procured. Many of his school-fellows in-

deed were scattered in the adjoining counties, who at a future period delighted to recall anecdotes of their former companion. Among these were a Mr. Roach, a Mr. Nugent, Mr. Daly already mentioned; the Rev. John Beatty, Vicar of Garvaghy, in the diocese of Dromore, whose entry into college took place on the same day; and Mrs. Montgomery,* the daughter of his master, who, though too young to remember any thing material herself, possessed opportunities of hearing something from others.

From these sources, gleaned in no connected form, or with the precision to be wished although not now to be expected, he was described as a short, thick, pale-faced, pock-marked boy, awkward in manner, backward and diffident at first, but afterwards acquiring sufficient confidence to become a leader in boyish sports, particularly in the exercise of ball-playing, or fives, in which he displayed great activity. In school he was considered indolent, though not destitute of talents; his disposition kind and generous, as far as school-boy matters were concerned; his temper sensitive, easily offended, though easily appeased; and always willing to join in such juvenile tricks and scenes of humour as were going forward. The general impression seems to have been, that he exhibited no marked superiority to younger eyes, although well thought of by his master; and that at the period of quitting school for the university, his habits were thoughtless and boyish, and his character yet unformed.

Here, however, it is certain he made considerable advances in learning. Mr. Hughes was an acquaintance of his father; and perceiving that the disposition of the son required forbearance and encouragement rather than harshness for advancement in his studies, he conversed with him on familiar terms, and incited, not compelled, his exertions. The pupil always acknowledged the kindness he had experienced, and the advantages derived from it, but at a future period seemed to doubt whether such a system were wise in the general government of schools. He affirms in the essay on Education,† speaking of the acquisition of languages, that “children are only to be taught through the medium of their fears.” As a general position, he is probably right; the master must make, what men of judgment and discrimination in the management of youth ever will make, the proper exceptions. The repetition of this opinion on other occasions induces the belief that he had witnessed ill effects from injudicious leniency, yet he would have been the last to practise the contrary system; nor did he, when placed in such a situation, pursue a plan which is thus recommended for the adoption of others.

The bent of his mind appeared to incline towards the Latin poets and historians. Ovid and Horace more especially divided his regard; the former was his chief favourite at this time, although afterwards the latter acquired that hold he must ever possess on a matured

* This lady is noticed in the Memoirs of Richard Lovel Edgeworth, from the mock marriage contracted by him with her when mere girl and boy, at the period he was under tuition with her father. Her reputation, however, was unspotted, and she afterwards married a clergyman.

† See Works, Vol. I. Bee, No. vi.

mind. Cicero he did not highly esteem; with Livy he was delighted; and, in the words of Mr. Daly, in speaking of this period of life, "when he had once mastered the difficulties of Tacitus, he found pleasure in the perusal and occasional translation of that writer." It is likewise said, that he exhibited on such occasions some attention to style, in consequence of a reproof from his elder brother, to whom having written some short and confused letters from school, he was told in reply, that "if he had but little to say, he should endeavour to say it well."

The reputation acquired by Henry in the university at this time was such as to give effect to his advice. He had matriculated in 1742, at a later period of life than is represented in the college register;* foreseeing, probably, he should be compelled, from want of the necessary interest for rising in the church, to unite the scholastic profession with the clerical; and, in such cases, the candidate not unfrequently postpones till a maturer age than usual, his entrance into the university. He came necessarily well prepared, distinguished himself soon, and on Trinity Monday 1743 was elected a scholar; a distinction which attaches to the successful candidate through life, and enables him either to remain in college with advantage, or, should he decline to proceed for a fellowship, to quit it for any other pursuit with honour. The former would seem to have been the wish of his father; but returning into the country in the succeeding vacation, flushed probably with his recent triumph, he indulged a youthful passion, and married; his sister says "at the early age of nineteen," but he must have been three years older, or have formed this connexion previous to entering the University. To some men, and in certain favourable situations, this tie becomes a stimulus to exertion; to others it seems a clog upon every effort at rising in life. Finding residence in college no longer eligible, the advantages of his scholarship were sacrificed: he retired, as appears from the college books, to the country; established a school in his father's neighbourhood; and in this occupation, added to that of curate at "forty pounds a year," though possessed of talents and character, he passed the remainder of life.

At Edgeworthstown, Oliver is said to have written verses; but on what subject, or of what degree of merit, is not known. His taste for poetry, there is no doubt, was soon formed. Among the poems familiar in the school from a spirit of boyish patriotism, were the works of their countrymen Denham, Roscommon, and Parnell; the former born, at least, in Ireland; the second a native of the immediate vicinity and a member of one of its chief families, the Dillons; and the last not only very popular by his "Hermit," but had been personally known to their relatives. From these writers Gold-

* "Maii 4^o 1741 (according to the University year) *Henricus Goldsmith P. ens. — Filius Caroli Clerici — Annum agens 17 — Natus in Comitatu Longford: — Educatus sub ferula Ma: Nelligan — Tutor Dr. Pelissier.*" Some inaccuracy exists regarding this gentleman's age. If only six years older than the poet, instead of seven, as asserted by Mrs. Hodson, he must have been twenty at the time of admission to college.

smith is believed to have first derived his style, general taste and devotion to what was considered the classical models of the art. The fact may have been as stated; but the impression, more probably, arises from Denham being deemed the founder of descriptive poetry, in which quality the "Traveller" and "Deserted Village" are considered to excel. It is a more curious coincidence that Denham and Roscommon were noted for their propensity to gaming, and the same charge, with whatever truth, has been brought against Goldsmith.

The immediate vicinity presented two persons whose fame was recent, and their poetical attributes sufficiently prominent to draw the attention of a youth of imaginative disposition.

One was Carolan or Turlogh O'Carolan, the celebrated native musician and poet, who, having spent his life in the neighbouring counties, died there in 1738; an event of no ordinary importance in the estimation of a people attached to every relic of ancient habits and manners, and priding themselves on the genius of one of their countrymen exclusively in heart and character Irish. He had been brought up at Carrick-on-Shannon, where the uncle of Goldsmith, the Rev. Mr. Contarine, first settled, and expired in the county of Roscommon, to which that gentleman afterwards removed. His fame was general as well as recent; his name and performances consequently familiar to Oliver, whose occasional visits to his relative took him over the ground trodden by one whom all classes were proud to talk about and to entertain. When on a visit to Ballyoughter he is said to have been once carried to visit him.

Carolan is considered the last of the ancient Irish bards; one of those characters around whom poetry, music, and tradition have thrown an air of veneration not extended to any of their successors in the art. By profession a retainer to rank and wealth, honoured with the familiarity and friendship of his patrons, beloved and admired by the people, he travelled the country with his horse and his harp, repaying such as performed the duties of hospitality with his music. The misfortune of blindness, from the age of eighteen, by small-pox, increased the interest attached to his occupation and character. He delighted in festivities, the appropriate scene, indeed, of a harper, and indulged freely in the habits which revelling inspires. He disdained to play merely for money. For many years he formed a welcome and admired guest among the older and more opulent families of Connaught; composed songs and music in their praise; played with taste and skill; and while thus acquiring fame, bestowed it; for many of his airs and verses are called after the names of his entertainers, who have thus acquired in Ireland a species of local immortality.

Such a character among a people naturally joyous, attached to music, strongly national, clinging to old customs with tenacity, and not yet free from many ruder characteristics, commanded a large share of popularity. His music spoke a general language, and added much to the native stock of which Ireland can boast.* His songs,

* The fertility and merit of this remnant of the bards, whose name and perfor-

though written in Irish, found ready translation; became a theme of praise in the conversation of all classes; and at the period of his death in the adjoining county of Roscommon, were sung with delight by the peasantry in their social meetings. Impressions produced by the admiration of those around us take a strong hold on juvenile minds; what we here praised we desire to imitate, for imitation is one of the first faculties which develops itself in early life; and of this blind native genius there is ample proof that Goldsmith heard and remembered much, by the account which he afterwards gave of him in a periodical work in London.*

The other local poet, Lawrence Whyte, was a bard of more humble pretensions, who, by the description of country manners and natural grievances, acquired some rural reputation. He is said to have been a native of Westmeath, not far distant from the paternal home of Goldsmith. His volume appeared about 1741, and, by the aid of a tolerable list of subscribers, among which appears the name of Allan Ramsay, together with a few preliminary lines addressed to him, reached a second edition. It contains some thousand lines, in the measure and something in the manner, of Swift. His humour, though homely, is lively and without ill-nature; his subjects local, commencing—as it seems the gentry of Ireland have never earned a name for discharging their pecuniary obligations—with an “Essay on Dunning,” which extends to seven, though short, cantos. The best piece is the “Parting Cup, or the Humours of Deoch an Doruis,” in four cantos: it is a lively and striking picture of a Westmeath farmer’s life about the year 1710, in the supposed history of Deoch an Doruis and his spouse: their former content, comparative wealth, hospitality, and sportive entertainments at the Christmas season, compared with their present (1741) distress and privations, the diminution of good feeling towards their superiors, and the discontent engendered by the pressure of high rents.

By this and other pieces in the volume, we find that the common rural complaints of Ireland,—the exactions of landlords, the spirit of emigration, the absenteeism of the gentry, with the neglect of their tenantry, estates, and residences,—were as strongly urged a century ago as at present. The matter is curious, and though sung

mances are so little known in England, attest his genius; while the occasion of the composition of the greater part gives us a view at that period of the primitive manners of the people. Mr. Hardiman, with whom the writer had the pleasure of an acquaintance in Dublin, and whose industry in the pursuit of works of Irish genius deserves so much praise, enumerates about one hundred and thirty of his compositions, many of which continue highly popular, and were accompanied by words also of his own composition. They take their names chiefly from himself, or from the persons whom he celebrated. Thus, “Carolan’s Concerto,” “Dream,” “Devotion,” “Elevation,” “Fairy Queens,” “Receipt for Drinking,” and many more. A few of those called after the families in his favourite county of Roscommon are, “O’Conor Faby,” “Young O’Conor Faby,” “Mrs. O’Conor,” “Mrs. O’Conor of Belanagari,” “Denis O’Conor,” “Doctor O’Conor,” “Maurice, O’Conor,” “Planxty Conor,” “Planxty Drury,” “John Duignan,” “Mrs. French,” “Nelly Plunket,” “Planxty Stafford,” “M’Dermott Roe,” “Mrs. M’Dermott Roe,” “Anna M’Dermott Roe,” “Mr. Edward M’Dermott Roe, &c. &c.”

* See Paper on Carolan, the Irish Bard, Works, Vol. I.

in the most homely strains, not without force; but the verses are further deserving notice as having been supposed to impress Goldsmith's mind at an early period with strong commiseration for the state of the peasantry, and to have suggested passages in the "Deserted Village."

* * * * *

"Thus farmers lived like gentlemen,
Ere lands were raised from five to ten;
Again from ten to three times five,
Then very few could hope to thrive;
But tugg'd against the rapid stream,
Which drove them back from whence they came;
At length 'twas canted* to a pound,
What tenant then could keep his ground.

"Not knowing which, to stand or fly,
When rent rolls mounted zenith high,
They had their choice to run away,
Or labour for a groat a day.
Now beggar'd and of all bereft,
Are doom'd to starve or live by theft;
Take to the mountains or the roads,
When banished from their old abodes;
Their native soil were forced to quit,
So Irish landlords thought it fit;
Who without ceremony or rout,
For their improvements turned them out;
Embracing still the highest bidder,
Inviting all ye *nations* hither,
Encouraging all strollers, caitiffs,
Or any other but the natives.

"Now wool is low and mutton cheap,
Poor graziers can no profit reap.
Alas! you hear them now complain
Of heavy rents and little gain;
Grown sick of bargains got by *cant*,
Must be in time reduced to want;
How many villages they razed,
How many parishes laid waste,
To fatten bullocks, sheep, and cows,
When scarce one parish has two ploughs;
And were it not for foreign wheat,
We now should want the bread we eat.
Their flocks do range on every plain,
That once produced all kind of grain,
Depopulating every village,
Where we had husbandry and tillage;
Fat bacon, poultry, and good bread,
By which the poor were daily fed.
The landlords, then, at every gale,
Besides their rent, got nappy ale,
A hearty welcome and good cheer,
With rent well paid them twice a year;
But now the case is quite reversed,
The tenants every day distress'd;
Instead of living well and thriving,
There's nothing now but leading, *driving*—
The lands are all monopolized,
The tenants rack'd and sacrificed;
Whole colonies to shun the fate
Of being oppress'd at such a rate,

* Auctioned.

*By tyrants who still raise their rent,
Sail'd to the Western continent :
Rather than live at home like slaves,
They trust themselves to winds and waves."*

* * * *

The censure of absentees has a variety of invective intermixed with some humour; but the following may suffice as a specimen of the former :—

"Our squires of late through Europe roam,
Are two well-bred to live at home ;
Are not content with Dublin College,
But range abroad for greater knowledge ;
To strut in velvets and brocades,
At balls and plays and masquerades ;
To have their rent their chiefest care is,
In bills to London and to Paris.
Their education is so nice,
They know all chances on the dice ;
Excepting when it is their fate
To throw away a good estate,
Then does the squire with empty purse
Rail at ill fortune with a curse.

* * * *

These absentees we here describe
Are mostly of our Irish tribe,
Who live in luxury and pleasure,
And throw away their time and treasure ;
Cause poverty and devastation,
And sink the credit of the nation.

* * * *

Their mansions moulder quite away,
And run to ruin and decay,
Left like a desert wild and waste,
Without the track of man or beast ;
Where wild fowl may with safety rest,
At every gate may build a nest ;
Where grass or weeds on pavements grow,
And every year is fit to mow,
No smoke from chimneys does ascend,
Nor entertainment for a friend ;
Nor sign of drink, or smell of meat,
For human creatures there to eat.*

* * * *

* One of the greatest offences of the more opulent classes in Ireland in the eyes of the peasantry at that time, was any seeming want of the duties of hospitality ; nor has the feeling, though diminished, passed away. By their interpretation, common to more rude communities, a man of rank or wealth was considered almost literally rather the steward than proprietor of his property ; held in trust as much for the benefit of his relatives, neighbours, and adherents, as for his own family ; and almost the first point noticed in the character of an Irish squire by a peasant of the present day is whether he is or is not a *hard* (or close) man. The opening scenes in the *Vicar of Wakefield*, and many other passages in Goldsmith, dwell upon the duties of hospitality.

CHAPTER II.

Adventure at Ardagh.—Rev. Mr. Contarine.—Entry into Trinity College, Dublin.
—Letter of the Rev. Dr. Wilson, his tutor.—Ballad writing.

His school vacations were frequently spent in the town of Ballymahon, where, many years afterwards, a few of his boyish tricks were remembered.

“It is now about forty years,” says the Rev. John Graham in a communication to the present writer, “since one of the directors of the sports of Ballymahon, Jack Fitzsimmons, an old man, who had experienced many vicissitudes and then kept the ball court, frequently amused us with stories of, as he termed him and as he was usually called when a boy, Noll Goldsmith. One of them, I remember, related to a depredation on the orchard of Tirlicken, adjoining the old mansion of that name now in ruins, then the property and residence of part of Lord Annaly’s family. In this adventure, which he detailed minutely, both were engaged: detection, however, either at the moment or soon afterwards, ensued; and, had it not been for the respectability of Goldsmith’s connexions, which secured immunity also to his companions, the consequences might have been unpleasant. This story, although it may seem like a different version of the deer-stealing of Shakspeare, I had no reason to disbelieve; the matter is common enough to most school-boys in the country; and poor Jack knew no more of the history of Shakspeare than of Homer. Several other notices of the poet from the same source have now escaped my recollection; the impression, however, remains, that he was as thoughtless as other boys of the same age, and as easily led into scrapes by his companions.”

An amusing adventure, which occurred in the last journey from home to Edgeworthstown school, is believed to have given birth to the chief incident in “*She Stoops to Conquer*.” Having set off on horseback, there being then and indeed now no regular wheeled conveyance thither from Ballymahon, he loitered on the road, amusing himself by viewing the neighbouring gentlemen’s seats. A friend had furnished him with a guinea; and the desire, perhaps, of spending it in (to a school-boy) the most independent manner at an inn, tended to slacken his diligence on the road. Night overtook him in the small town of Ardagh, about half way on his journey. Inquiring for the best house in the place, meaning the best inn, he chanced to address, as is said, a person named Cornelius Kelly, who boasted of having taught fencing to the Marquis of Granby, and was then domesticated in the house of Mr. Featherstone, a gentleman of fortune in the town. He was known as a notorious wag;

and willing to play off a trick upon one whom he no doubt discovered to be a swaggering school-boy, directed him to the house of his patron.

Suspecting no deception, Oliver proceeded as directed; gave authoritative orders about the care of his horse; and, being thence conceived by the servants to be an expected guest, was ushered into the presence of their master, who immediately discovered the mistake. Being, however, a man of humour, and willing to enjoy an evening's amusement with a boy under the influence of so unusual a blunder, he encouraged it, particularly when, by the communicative disposition of the guest, it was found that he was the son of an old acquaintance on his way to school. Nothing occurred to undeceive the self-importance of the youth, fortified by the possession of a sum he did not often possess; wine was therefore ordered in addition to a good supper, and the supposed landlord, his wife and daughters were invited to partake of it. On retiring for the night, a hot cake was ordered for breakfast the following morning; nor was it until preparing to quit the house next day, that he discovered he had been entertained in a private family.

This story like the plot of his comedy, has been thought improbable; and were it told of a person in mature life, or mixing much in the world, there might be, under common circumstances, ground for disbelief. But when we consider the age of Goldsmith at the time, his openness to deception at all times, that the time was night, while positive information described the house as an inn, and that the submission of the servants and the humour of the master confirmed the original idea; moreover, when we consider that the house, however good, bore no particular mark of distinction, and that Irish landlords then, like those of America now, were inquisitive and familiar in their manners, and believed that their guests were under more obligations to them than they to their guests, it is easy to conceive how a school-boy should be led in the error. Mrs. Hodson heard the story early in life, which could scarcely have been told without some foundation; and the late Sir Thomas Featherstone,* whose grandfather was the supposed landlord, remembered, when questioned, something of the anecdote.

In connexion with his play, the story illustrates another peculiarity which belongs to Goldsmith more than to any other writer of his day; this was to draw upon his own personal and family history for many of the facts and characters found in his writings. These, when minutely traced, show how largely he has written from himself, from his recollections, experience, and feelings; and to this is owing much of that truth, vigour, and freshness, of which we all feel the presence and the power. Thus, to his poems, novel, plays, *Citizen of the World*, and detached essays, actual life furnished most of the scenes and persons; not only his own character and adventures, but those of nearly all his relatives, were taxed for the amusement of the reader: so that when invention failed, he had only to draw upon his

* From the Rev. John Graham.

memory. The recollection of this fact may serve to corroborate the truth of the preceding story having really formed the groundwork of the play.

An event now occurred, which though under other circumstances gratifying, threatened in its consequences to interfere with the design of sending him to college by still further narrowing his father's resources. This was the private marriage of his elder sister, Catherine, with Mr. Daniel Hodson, the son of a gentleman of good property, residing at St. John's near Athlone. To her the union promised to be advantageous; while to her husband, in consequence of her want of fortune, it was thought the reverse. He was besides young, though not a boy; and being at the moment, or shortly before, a pupil of her brother Henry for the completion of his studies, the match looked so much like a breach of confidence and honour on the part of the family, although unknown to its members, as to give rise to extreme indignation on the part of her father. The tradition is, that in the first transports of anger he uttered a wish that as she had acted like an undutiful child in causing suspicion to be cast on his integrity of character, she might never have one of her own to make a similar return to parental care; in short, that she might die childless.* So harsh and hasty a sentence, foreign to his general character for good nature, was soon recalled; neither was the purport of the prayer strictly fulfilled, as she bore three children; but, in the superstitious feeling of the county, it was supposed to be not without a certain effect, as they all, though her son left a numerous offspring, died before her.

To remove all suspicion of being privy to the act of his daughter, Mr. Goldsmith, influenced by the highest sense of honour, made a sacrifice detrimental to the interests of the other members of his family. He entered into a legal engagement (Sep. 7. 1744), "to pay to Daniel Hodson, Esq., of St. John's, Roscommon, 400*l.*, as the marriage-portion of his daughter Catherine, then the wife of the said Daniel Hodson." To raise this sum, with such limited means as he possessed, was impossible; but in lieu of it, the lands rented from Mr. Newstead, then worth about 40*l.* per annum, in addition to 12*l.* per annum of tithes, were assigned, until the money should be paid.† These sums, which seem now apparently small, were in that period and country considerable; much more than the rector of Kilkenny West could afford. His living, though at present worth about 350*l.* per annum, did not then amount to 200*l.* The sacrifice consequently was great; it evinced all the sincerity of an honest, but not the consideration of a prudent man; and though satisfactory to his pride, crippled the means of providing for the remainder of his children.

The immediate effect of this reduction of income fell more heavily

* From the information of one of her granddaughters to the Rev. Mr. Graham.

† See a draft of this agreement in the registry of the Four Courts, Dublin, B. 117. p. 503. No. 81604. For assistance in the search for this and other legal documents connected with the Goldsmith family, I am indebted to Mr. Thomas Colhoun, of Dublin, whose professional knowledge made more easy what I should otherwise have found a work of time and labour.

on Oliver, who instead of entering college like his brother, a pensioner, was obliged to contemplate the more humble condition of sizer. From this, as a tacit confession of limited means, if not of poverty, his pride, it is traditionally said, revolted; in his own opinion, it occasioned many subsequent mortifications, deprived him of that consideration among his companions to which youth attaches so much value, and by the privations in consequence endured, depressed his spirit at the time, and even influenced the tenor of its future life, by rendering poverty so familiar that she was never afterwards viewed with terror. In vain it is said his father endeavoured to conquer what he considered merely juvenile pride; but a more persuasive adviser appeared in his uncle, the Rev. Thomas Contarine, who had married a sister of Mr. Goldsmith. At his house the youth had been a frequent visiter during school vacations; he had likewise contributed to the expense of his education; and having continued through life an active and steadfast friend, his kindness deserves some further notice here.

He derived his origin from a member of the noble family of the Contarini of Venice, who, having entered into one of the monastic orders, was imprudent enough to form an attachment to a lady similarly situated, a noble nun; and both wanting resolution to subdue their passion, an elopement and marriage took place. Unable to remain in Italy from this double violation of the laws of the church, they fled to France, where his wife died of small-pox. Here he found himself pursued by ecclesiastical hostility, and for better security proceeded to England. In London his faith probably formed no introduction to favour, and Ireland was sought as a more congenial asylum. At Chester, on his way thither, he met with a young lady named Chaloner, related to Doctor Chaloner some time provost of Trinity College, Dublin, who possessing a fluent knowledge of his native language, they found pleasure in the society of each other, until the intercourse terminated in marriage. Attachment to his original faith had probably become loosened by the persecution he had experienced. Conforming, therefore, to the Protestant Church, he obtained, by the interest of his wife's connexions, ecclesiastical preferment in the diocese of Elphin; and of this couple Mr. Contarine was the grandchild.

He was born in Cheshire, sent to school at Wrexham, in the adjoining county of Denbigh; but removed to Ireland at the age of seventeen, entered Trinity College the following year (1702)* where he became distinguished for talents and diligence, as well as for the possession of those moral qualities that confer on talents their highest value. A proof of the esteem in which he was held, and of which any one might be proud, was an intimate friendship with the celebrated Bishop Berkley, then his senior in the university about a year,

* "1702 Octobris die 2^o.—*Tho. Contarine Sizator—Filius Austin Contarine Coloni Annum agens 18—Natus Cestuiæ—Educatus Wrexom in Walliæ sub Ma. Maxwell, —Tutor, Sub. Tisdall.*"—College Register.

and by whom he is said to have been selected to attend him in the dangerous experiment of ascertaining the degree of pain suffered during strangulation, on which occasion he saved the life of the philosopher. Taking orders, he procured the living of Killmore, near Carrick on Shannon, and afterwards that of Oran, near Roscommon, where he built and resided in a pretty house called Emblemore, changed by its subsequent possessor, Mr. Edward Mills, a relative of Goldsmith, for the more classical appellation of Tempe. He lies buried in his church, about a mile and half distant from the house.

Here he was frequently visited by Mr. Charles O'Connor, also residing in the county of Roscommon, distinguished for his knowledge of Irish antiquities, who found reason to be pleased with his taste and intelligence. The grandson of this gentleman, the late Dr. O'Connor, librarian at Stowe, in *Memoirs of his relative*, printed but not published, thus speaks of Mr. Contarine:—

“Mr. O'Connor was not yet known as an author, but he began to be noticed as an ingenious man. The first acquaintance with whom he opened a literary correspondence was Dr. Fergus; the next was the Rev. Thomas Contarine, a clergyman of the Established Church, and the well-known companion of Bishop Berkley. He was son to an Italian of the Contarini family at Venice. His parts and the goodness of his heart procured him the friendship of one of the greatest geniuses of the age, and it is to him Goldsmith alludes in his *Deserted Village*.” Here follow the lines, beginning

“Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,” &c.

By the following passage from the same work, it would appear as if the Poet had seen under the roof of his uncle another of the characters sketched in the poem,—that of the Veteran,—in an officer of some rank. This may be correct; but the terms in which the invitation to the supposed visiter are couched, “kindly bade to stay,” imply more of a dependent than the rank assigned him by Mr. O'Connor would warrant, unless we believe the condescension is assumed for the sake of poetic effect:

“It is not generally known that Major M'Dermott, of Emlagh, in the county of Roscommon, was the old soldier to whom Goldsmith alluded in the following lines—

‘The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
Sate by the fire and talk'd the night away;
Wept o'er his wounds, and tales of sorrow done,
Shoulder'd his crutch, and show'd how fields were won.’

“I had this anecdote (adds Dr. O'Connor) from Mr. O'Connor, who often saw the Major at Contarine's house, and enjoyed his society so much, that he repeatedly spoke of him, even in his last years, as a person whom he never could forget, on account of the

vivacity of his temper, and the affecting emotions with which he would tell the history of his own adventures.”*

With his uncle Oliver spent most of the time he was absent from school, and is believed by the family to have derived advantage from his superintendence not only in study, but in the cultivation of those generous feelings by which he was afterwards distinguished. This kind and considerate man saw in him a warmth of heart requiring some skill to direct, and a latent genius that wanted time to mature; and these impressions none of his subsequent follies and irregularities wholly obliterated. His purse and affection, therefore, as well as his house, were ever open to him: the nephew knew the value of his regard; and however pleasure or thoughtlessness led him to neglect the admonitions of so benevolent and judicious a friend, his gratitude and attachment, whenever he had occasion to write or speak of him, were not the less ardent and sincere.

More attention was probably shown him by this gentleman on account of having no son of his own, the only child by his marriage with Miss Goldsmith being a daughter, afterwards Mrs. Jane Lawder, a few years older than the poet, and to whom he wrote some letters, still in existence, when in London. The death of Mrs. Contarine, in June, 1744, produced no diminution of regard in his uncle.† He is said to have taken the trouble to point out to the youth, in affectionate terms, the advantages of entering college in the only manner his father's circumstances now permitted; that no degradation was implied by it, for he had himself entered in a similar manner; that he had thus acquired the friendship of the eminent and the good; and that it would be highly to his credit, and probably benefit his future prospects, to enter the university in a class into which admission, of itself, implied some advancement in his studies.

A story told him by this gentleman of two of his relatives by the female side, illustrates the prevailing propensity of the Poet to introduce his family history into his writings. In an essay printed in 1760, and now first included in his works, called “A True History

* “Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the late Charles O'Connor of Belagunore, by his Grandson, the Rev. Charles O'Connor, D. D.,” obligingly communicated by Mr. Smith, librarian at Stowe.

† Mr. M. A. Mills, a relative of the Goldsmith family, with whose father the Poet was intimately acquainted at college, and who is now the proprietor of Tempe, which was visited by the writer in 1830, thus communicates some particulars of the monumental remains of that family:—

“After three successive days' excavation among the ruins of Oran Church, I discovered the monumental stone placed over the remains of the Contarine family. It was erected by the Rev. Thomas Contarine, vicar of this parish, to the memory of several of his family, concluding with ‘his dearest wife, Jane Contarine, who, after a well-spent life, departed out of it the 12th day of June, 1744, in the 63d year of her age.’ But, although Dr. Contarine died in this house, and was buried in the same place, the stone contains no notice of the time of his death or of his age. The sculpture is in relief, of a very rude description. One corner of the stone is broken, by which a word is defaced; but as a fac-simile may gratify you, I will make an attempt at it. * * * Mrs. Contarine, formerly Miss Jane Goldsmith, and aunt to the poet, was likewise aunt to my father; thus our connexion, or rather relationship.”

for the Ladies,"* appears a story contrasting romantic with reasonable love. It is told of Thomas and James Chaloners, maternal relatives of his uncle. The names are given at length, and the circumstances, with slight embellishment, were true.

The former of these gentlemen, Thomas, married above his own rank, clandestinely and for love, a lady of beauty and fortune; the latter took a homely partner in his own sphere of life, and without the least touch of romance in their courtship or union. Both brothers were soon after called by a question of property to Ireland; but a storm arising, threatened the vessel with destruction on the rocks lining the Irish coast. Thomas, in this emergency, determined to remain and die with his bride: James, who was something more of a philosopher, found there was a chance of escape by swimming; and, telling his wife he would save her if he could, plunged into the sea and reached the shore. Contrary to all expectation the vessel was saved. The more romantic pair felt pride in the superior ardour of their attachment, and fondly believed that the same feeling of devotion could never cease. The sacrifice, however, meditated on this alarming occasion came to be expected afterward on all the minor matters of life by one, while proportionate gratitude for such compliances were sought or exacted from the other. Both were disappointed; each expected too much from the other, and could not conceal their dissatisfaction when undeceived. Constraint was mutually felt; for love, to be lasting, must be free. Slight negligences arose, followed by jealousies and complaints; and these produced recriminations, coolness, and sullen silence. Returning affection caused the first disagreements to be made up; but the original error of demanding more from human nature than its imperfections permit, constantly renewed them. Gradually they became more serious, causing first indifference, and then alienation; so that aversion, and, at length, separation, was the result. On the other hand, James and his wife, the more sober couple, of cooler temperaments and expectations, went through life with equanimity,—their content greater if their raptures fewer; lived very comfortably, entertained their friends hospitably, and reared a numerous family, for which they contrived to provide.

The moral he inculcates in this story is, that "Love between the sexes should be regarded as an inlet to friendship; nor should the most beautiful of either hope to continue the passion a month beyond the wedding day. Marriage strips love of all its finery; and if friendship does not appear to supply its place, there is then an end of matrimonial felicity."

The time having arrived for entering the university, Oliver was admitted a sizer of Trinity College, Dublin, June 11, 1745. An error in the year of admission has prevailed in all accounts hitherto given of him, which arises from the university year commencing on the 9th July, so that the six previous months appear, to an inadvertent examiner, to be of earlier date than they really are.

* See Works, vol. i.

The following is the entry extracted from the official register, in which however there are two errors; one, stating him to be born in Westmeath, which arose from the abode of his father being in that county; and the other, in representing him to be only fifteen years old when he was really more than sixteen, if the date of his birth, November 1728, be, as we must believe, correct:—

1744 (Really 1745) 11 ^o . Junii.	Oliver Goldsmith, Siz.	Filius Caroli Clerici.	Annum Agens 15.	Natus in Comitatu Westmeath.	Educatus sub ferula Ma. Hughes.	Tutor, Ma. Wilder.
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In a list of eight sizers entered on the same day, his name is the last enrolled. His answering, therefore, in the previous examination, it is presumed, was less satisfactory than that of others, there being on such occasions a contest for superiority among such as apply for the benefits of the foundation. But, considering that he was the junior candidate of the party, and no doubt triumphed over many other competitors, the fact of admission at all is evidence of considerable proficiency in classical knowledge.

There are five classes of students in Trinity College; noblemen, noblemen's sons, fellow-commoners, pensioners, and sizers or servitors, or, as they have been sometimes called in familiar language, in Ireland, poor scholars: one of those judicious and considerate arrangements of the founders of such institutions, that gives to the less opulent the opportunity of cultivating learning at a trifling expense. The sizer has his commons and tuition free, and pays for his chamber a sum little more than nominal; while, by officiating as chanter at chapel, what is called regulator at commons, or other minor offices, he has the opportunity, if industriously disposed, of gaining sums that may, with economy, render him nearly independent of assistance from his friends.

To obtain these advantages he is expected to come more advanced in classical learning than others; he is commonly of a riper age; is expected to display application in his studies; and in time to acquire, or struggle for, university honours, such as a scholarship or premiums. He wears a black gown of coarse stuff without sleeves; a plain black cloth cap without a tassel; and dines at the Fellows' table after they have retired. At the period in question they wore red caps, and were compelled to perform derogatory offices, such as sweeping part of the courts in the morning, carrying up the dishes from the kitchen to the Fellows' dinner table, and waiting in the hall until that body had dined.

From the more menial compliances they have long been relieved; and from the last, that of carrying up dinner, about fifty years ago, by a sizer flinging one of the dishes with its contents at the head of a citizen, who, on Trinity Sunday, when many assembled to witness the scene, made impertinent remarks on the duty he was obliged to perform. When brought before the then provost (Murray,) who had himself been a sizer, for this irregularity, the latter had the manliness to tell the student that it was but a paltry species of pride to be above the performance of what college regulations required; that he (the provost) had performed them with humility and thankfulness in return for the advantages received, and which raised him

from nothing to the situation he then held. With a sharp rebuke to the offender, porters were thenceforward appointed to relieve the sizers from this mark of servitude.

In the routine of these duties, Goldsmith no doubt took his share; and the indignant feeling they occasioned in a sensitive mind breaks out in the *Essay on Polite Literature in Europe*, when speaking of universities:—"Sure pride itself has dictated to the fellows of our colleges the absurd passion of being attended at meals and on other public occasions, by those poor men who, willing to be scholars, come in upon some charitable foundation. It implies a contradiction, for men to be at once learning the liberal arts and at the same time treated as slaves; at once studying freedom and practising servitude."*

Something of the same kind appears again in a letter to his brother written soon after this time, in which, however, the unquestionable benefits derived to indigence from the institution are admitted:—

"The reasons you have given me for breeding up your son a scholar are judicious and convincing. I should however be glad to know for what particular profession he is designed. If he be assiduous and divested of strong passions (for passions in youth always lead to pleasure,) he may do very well in your college; for it must be owned that the industrious poor have good encouragement there, perhaps better than in any other in Europe. But if he has ambition, strong passions, and an exquisite sensibility of contempt, do not send him there, unless you have no other trade for him except your own."

At present, students of this description have no just cause for complaint in Dublin. It is obviously for the advantage of the class of persons whom it is meant to benefit that some difference, though neither derogatory nor unreasonable, should exist between them and other students. Were all distinction abrogated, the sons of those whose circumstances do not require the indulgence would not hesitate to become sizers; and in time the really indigent, who are too often likewise the friendless, would either be excluded, or the number of candidates so much increased,—and there are always many more than can be admitted,—as to diminish materially the chance of being received.

One of those preceding him on the list on the day of entry, was his friend and school-fellow from Edgeworthstown, afterwards the Rev. John Beatty, his senior in years and superior in attainments; an advantage which, as appears from the records, he retained during the whole of their stay in college. They were placed under the same tutor, and became, as is believed by the relatives of the latter, for a time, what is familiarly called among the students *chums*, that is, occupied the same apartments; these were the top rooms adjoining the library of the building now numbered 35, and where the name of the poet, scratched on a window pane with a diamond, in one of his idle moods, is still to be seen. Another who is said to

* See Works, vol. i.

have stood in the same familiar relation to him at a subsequent period, was the Rev. Josiah Marshall, afterwards rector of Garvagh, in the county of Londonderry. Others have been named who died at a more remote period; and a few contemporaries who remembered him survived in various parts of Ireland at the commencement of this century.

Among such as are known to have been his intimate associates were Mr. Edward Mills, a relative, Robert Bryanton, Charles and Edward Purdon, James Willington (with whom he afterwards became associated in London,) and Doctors Thomas Wilson and Michael Kearney, afterwards fellows of the college. The Rev. Mr. Wolfen and Mr. Lauchlan Maclean knew him well; and he appears to have been slightly remembered by Burke and Flood; Richard Malone, afterwards Lord Sunderlin; Bishops Bernard, Marlay, and Stopford; the two former afterwards well known in the literary circles of London.

The first notice of his college career was derived from Dr. Thomas Wilson. Early in 1776, Mr. Edmond Malone, to whose critical labours our poetical literature is so much indebted, having collected the works of the poet for publication in Dublin, in two volumes 12mo. (1777)—afterwards republished in 1780 by Evans, a bookseller in London,—applied to that gentleman for such memorials as official records supplied, and in return received the following letter, transcribed from the original now in possession of the writer.* It was never before printed. A few memoranda were added of his entry into college, and the time of obtaining his degree, which, being erroneous in part, need not appear here: the former is already and the latter will be hereafter given correctly; with a notice of a youthful indiscretion in which the poet became involved.

“I send you,” writes Dr. Wilson, Feb. 24, 1776, “all the intelligence I can derive from the College registry relating to Dr. Goldsmith. ’Twill clear up one point, which will prove a satisfaction to his surviving friends, as it will show that he was never expelled, and that the offence for which he was censured was only a juvenile indiscretion, and did not in the least affect his moral character.

“While he resided in the college, he exhibited no specimens of that genius which in his maturer years raised his character so high. Squalid poverty and its concomitants, idleness and despondence, probably checked every aspiring hope, and repressed the exertion of his talents; and the savage brutality that shone so conspicuous in the truly amiable gentleman (Mr. Wilder) who was to rule his studies under the notion of a tutor, was better calculated to frighten than to allure.

“I well remember, for he was in the class below me, that his tutor examining him in the Sen. Soph. class, commenced his judgments with a *Male*, and concluded them with a *Valde Bene*. ’Twas a mistake that the good Doctor (the tutor) often fell into, to think he was witty when he was simply malicious. Possibly the world is

* By favour of Dr. H. U. Thomson, of Piccadilly, London.

obliged for his (Goldsmith's) works to his idleness and miscarriages in the college, which deprived him of all hope of rising in the church to a curacy, on which he might have comfortably starved to a good old age."

The character of the unhappy person to whom the direction of his studies was entrusted, "under the notion of a tutor," as Dr. Wilson expresses it, appears to have been wholly unfit, either in temper or general conduct, for the superintendence of youth. Many unfavourable stories are still told of him in the university; and the mortifications endured by his pupil from mingled caprice and harshness, were supposed to have not only obstructed his progress in learning, but by producing despondency and irregularities, tinged with a darker hue parts of his future life. This person was fixed upon from being the younger son of a gentleman living within a few miles of the Rev. Mr. Goldsmith, and Oliver had been especially recommended to his care. He possessed considerable scientific attainments, clouded by a disposition represented as almost savage, and passions so irregular as to require for himself that indulgence he rarely extended to others. In Dublin he was noted for strength, agility, and ferocity; an instance of which was exhibited in the streets by springing, at a bound, from the pavement on a hackney coach proceeding at a fast pace, and felling to the ground the driver, who had accidentally touched his face with the whip. Of his strange caprice or injustice in the performance of his public duties, the Rev. Dr. Marsh mentioned an instance. When filling the Senior Lecturer's chair, the first three places were admitted to be the right of Marsh, Mead, and Hans, the best answerers in the order of their names, which he thought fit to transpose into the order of Hans, Mead, and Marsh, assigning as the reason the superior euphony of the latter arrangement.

To such students as incurred his dislike, he proved a bitter persecutor at the public examinations; and an illustration of this disposition appears in the vindictive conduct adopted towards another. When a student himself, he found constant means of evading college discipline, and gaining egress from its walls at night by the connivance of a companion, whose window in the front square being secured by an iron palisading, a movable bar had been skilfully introduced unknown to the authorities, which admitted of removal at pleasure. Soon afterwards (1744,) he was elected to a fellowship: the office of Sub-dean, who has charge of the general conduct of the students, came to him in rotation; and now, from being an offender against discipline he became its most strict, and often severe preserver. The first exertion of authority was a visit to the apartment of which he had formerly so often made use, but unexpectedly he found the outlet already secured. On sternly inquiring of its then possessor, a friend of the previous occupier whether there had not been a screw bar before the window, the reply was in the affirmative, and that *he* very well knew it. To further questions uttered in an insulting manner, by whom the alteration was made, the student (afterwards the Rev. Mr. G——, an amiable man) was tempted to reply, "By me, sir;

for I *knew you*." The remark was never forgiven; he assailed him unremittingly ever afterwards at the public examinations, and when his proficiency admitted of little censure, found a handle for ill-nature and sarcasm in the personal peculiarities of the youth. These in return produced retorts not quite in keeping with subordination, or the decorum of the place and occasion, until at length an opportunity offered of turning him down to the bottom of his class.

With passions so uncontrolled and unamiable, he could be considerate and charitable. On the death of Dr. Maguire, about 1768, he succeeded to the mathematical chair: at his own expense, he published, for the benefit of the widow and family, an edition of Newton's Arithmetic, prepared for the press by the deceased, with copious notes by himself. He intimated likewise a design of completing and publishing, from the same kind motives, three other unfinished treatises of his predecessor, on Arithmetic, Equations, and Ratios. And it may be remarked that at the moment (1770) he first appeared in the press, his quondam pupil, after long struggling with obscurity and poverty, had attained the summit of literary reputation. The end of this gentleman proved as melancholy as his habits had been exceptionable. Early in 1770, he quitted the university for one of its livings, that of Rathmelton in the county of Donegal. Here, it is said, a female of equivocal character exercised such influence in his house as to deny him admission when he chose to stop out late at night, and on attempting at such times to enter by the window, usually met with strong resistance, until certain terms of capitulation with the party within had been proposed and accepted. It is therefore scarcely matter of surprise that he was found dead one morning on the floor of his room, with traces of severe contusion, the cause of which, as no investigation took place, remained unknown.*

Few things could be more unfortunate for the pupil than the selection—innocently, indeed, for his peculiarities were not then developed—of such a preceptor. His age and thoughtlessness required forbearance; his temper and habits some indulgence; his indolence, if it at this time existed, rather persuasion than harsh reproofs and disgraces; and it further appeared that his tastes and favourite pursuits were classical, while those of his tutor were devoted to science. This did not tend to allay latent prejudices formed by the latter; for the first eighteen months indeed no particular instance of hostility on the one side, or dislike on the other, is recorded, though we had evidence of strong distaste to the usual science course in the university having been early imbibed by him, and a remembrance of the mortifications it occasioned, retained by him through life. Poetry and the more abstract studies have little in common; matters of fact and of imagination rarely retain an equal degree of regard to the same minds; and we can readily conceive a young man of lively fancy fonder of exercising its qualities,

* Communicated by a grand niece of the Poet, who became, by marriage, singularly enough, connected with the unfortunate tutor, to the Rev. John Graham.

such as they are, than of treasuring up for future use the scientific speculations and acquisitions of philosophers.

As from the first, he did not hesitate to avow dislike to all the graver studies of the place, he at a future time appeared to seek an excuse for it; and many years afterwards, when writing the *Life of Parnell*, seemed willing hypothetically to infer, what he made no attempt to prove, that a similar feeling was entertained by that poet. "His progress," he says, "through the college course of study, was probably marked with but little splendour; his imagination might have been too warm to relish the cold logic of Burgersdicius, or the dreary subtleties of Smiglesius."* By the accounts of his friend Beatty, who reasoned with him on his neglect, and the offence likely to be taken by his tutor on this account, he expressed repeatedly his contempt for mathematics, and greater dislike, if possible, towards ethics and logic. In the same spirit he tells us, in the *Essay on Polite Literature in Europe*—"Mathematics are, perhaps, too much studied at our universities. This seems a science to which the meanest intellects are equal. I forget who it is that says, 'All men might understand mathematics if they would.'"[†]

Displeasure, arising from the recollection of reproofs incurred by neglect of this study, may be traced in several passages of the same work. In the following, in addition to an implied condemnation of science, we have an indirect apology for another of his characteristics soon afterwards developed—a love of gayety and social enjoyments,—much more easy to censure than at his age to resist:

"Upon this principle (that of giving, as he says, too much encouragement to seminaries of learning) all our magnificent endowments of colleges are erroneous, and, at best, more frequently enrich the prudent than reward the ingenious. A lad whose passions are not strong enough in youth to mislead him from that path of science which his tutors and not his inclination have chalked out, by four or five years' perseverance will probably obtain every advantage and honour his college can bestow. I forget whether the simile has been used before, but I would compare the man whose youth has been thus passed in the tranquillity of dispassionate prudence to liquors that never ferment, and consequently, continue always muddy. Passions may raise a commotion in the youthful breast, but they disturb only to refine it. However this be, mean talents in colleges are often rewarded with an easy subsistence. The candidates for preferment of this kind often regard their admission as a patent for future laziness; so that a life begun in studious labour is often continued in luxurious affluence."

There is, in these remarks, with perhaps something of truth, more of a querulous spirit, arising from his own position while in college, the little consideration he enjoyed in it, or the mortifications it was his lot to experience. It is obviously easy, but fallacious, to censure

* See Works, vol. iii.

† See Works, vol. i. The dislike of Gray to mathematics and metaphysics seems to have been quite as great as that of Goldsmith.

general systems of education, because many of the details may be inapplicable to particular individuals. Were it distinctly foreseen, that the youth of to-day is to be the distinguished poet, statesman, or mathematician of a future period, his education might be varied, possibly with advantage, though this by no means follows; for exclusive devotion to one pursuit is as objectionable in education as in other things. But the bent of a boy's mind cannot always be ascertained with precision; even his wishes cannot safely be trusted; and he must, therefore, as the sure method of disciplining and enlarging his faculties, follow "that path which his tutors, and not his inclinations, have chalked out."

That colleges enrich the prudent, is sometimes true; but who are to be rewarded,—the attentive or the negligent? That the ingenious are neglected is so far from being the fact, that young men who exhibit proofs of talent at college are noticed, praised, and even remembered long after the occasion, in a greater degree than their share of merit probably deserved; as the future lives of many have furnished little evidence of superiority. Ingenuity, therefore, in whatever form displayed, rarely passes without its reward. But if the implied compact entered into with such institutions, that of conforming to the system by which they are conducted, be disregarded, no just cause for complaint can fairly exist if their benefits be withheld. Poets, indeed, may think otherwise; and several of our distinguished names in that class looked back with little satisfaction to the period of their lives spent at a University; willing, perhaps, to forget their own errors or negligences in the occasional defects or mistakes observed in their instructors; but it is idle for the inexperienced to find fault with modes of study or the restraints of discipline. When a student complains of his college, the probability is, that the college has much more reason to complain of him.

The truth of the simile employed as illustrative of the force of juvenile passions, although repeated in three other passages of his writings, is very questionable; for many of our greatest men require no such apology for their youth: the allusion, however, is to himself. A certain thoughtlessness, supposed to belong to the poetical temperament, became early developed, and a facility of temper that rarely resisted importunity of any kind, gave him the character of good nature. His disposition, naturally social and generous, found encouragement in kindred associations with youth. Passions at such seasons, he informs us, lead to pleasure; and his, from all the accounts that can now be gleaned, appear not to have been inactive, although no specific breaches of propriety, or of college discipline, were at that period laid to his charge. The general effect is supposed to have fostered that disinclination to the proper studies of the place, which on other occasions he felt disposed to attribute wholly to taste: the expenses incurred in amusements but ill suited the nature of his supplies, at all times of a scanty description. A story has been told of his having at this period formed an imprudent female attachment; which, but for interposition of some of his friends, was likely to have terminated in marriage.

One of the qualifications which ensured popularity among fellow-students, but often dangerous to the possessor from the temptations to which it leads, was the talent of singing a good song. His voice, naturally tolerable, acquired more power by cultivation, and by a little taste and skilful management became very agreeable. In London, to a late period of life, he amused his friends with Irish songs, exhibiting much of the peculiar humour of his country. A taste for music formed an additional recommendation, though perhaps with no considerable knowledge of it as a science.* He played tolerably well on the German flute; it is recorded that even at this time when ever vexed by temporary annoyances he had recourse to this instrument, and blew it with a kind of mechanical vehemence till his equanimity of temper returned.

Early in 1747, his father, whose character he took pleasure in sketching in several of his productions, died; the induction of his successor, the Rev. Mr. Wynne, taking place in the March of that year. The wealth of the family, never as we have seen great, or as he himself hints, well husbanded, necessarily suffered a serious diminution: the means of the widow were little more than sufficient to provide the necessaries of life for the other branches of her family: remittances to Oliver therefore ceased, and his prospects became darker than ever. In this situation it would have been necessary to have withdrawn from college, but for the occasional contribution of friends, among whom his uncle Contarine formed the principal: these were from their nature limited, and perhaps irregular. His difficulties were consequently considerable, during the whole of his subsequent stay in the university, and no doubt often occasioned that state of "squalid poverty" of which Dr. Wilson speaks. In this situation a constitutional buoyancy, or, as he phrases it in another place, "a knack at hoping," kept him from despair; but, when combined with the reproaches of his tutor, rendered frequent despondency and depression unavoidable. Under such circumstances, he was more than once driven to the necessity of pawning his books, until the stated supply arrived, or some friendly hand interposed to release them; when on such emergencies Beatty† would lend him others for the purposes of study. The disposal of the books coming to the knowledge of the tutor, he, in addition to bitter taunts and reprehension, said that he was like the silly fellow in Horace—*Mutat quadrata rotundis*.

There is, we are assured, no stimulus to ingenuity like distress. Goldsmith was now taught for the first time to draw upon his resources in a mode which, however beneath the dignity, was not inappropriate to the calling of the future poet. This was the composition of street ballads, to which Beatty‡ knew him frequently to resort when in want of small sums for present exigencies. The price of these was five shillings each, and all that he wrote found a

* See "Of the Opera in England," "Schools of Music," Works, vol. i., and various passages in his writings.

† Communicated by his son, the Rev. Mr. Beatty.

‡ Ibid.

ready sale at a shop known as the sign of the Rein-deer, in Mount-rath Street. None of the names of these verses were recollected at the time Mr. Beatty related the fact to his friends, but popular occurrences commonly supplied the subjects.* Poor as they may be supposed to have been in character, from the remuneration received and the class for whom intended, he is said to have exhibited for his offspring all the partiality of a parent, by strolling the streets at night to hear them sung, and marking the degree of applause which each received from the auditors.

CHAPTER III.

Riot of the Students.—Sentence upon Goldsmith and others.—Absents himself from the University.—Anecdotes.—Takes the degree of B.A.—His Father.

IN May, 1747, a riot of the students of Trinity College, in which he took part, had nearly involved him in more serious difficulties than any yet experienced, although his tutor† (for such was the character of this gentleman) was said to have encouraged privately what he was afterwards called upon to punish in his corporate capacity. A few of the particulars are given by Dr. Wilson, in the postscript to the letter to Malone already quoted:—

“Several scholars were expelled for raising a sedition and riot in the city of Dublin. ’Twas occasioned by a report that a scholar had been arrested in Fleet Street. To revenge this supposed insult, a numerous body of scholars rushed into town under the command of *Gallows* Walsh,—who in those days was controller-general of riots,—explored the dens of the bailiffs, conducted the prisoners in triumph to the college, and pumped them soundly in the old cistern. In those days of primitive simplicity, the pumping of constables was a very fashionable amusement. The commander then proposed breaking open Newgate, and making a general jail delivery. The enterprise was attempted, but failed for want of cannon. Roe, who was the constable of the castle, and was well supplied with artillery, repulsed the assailants; and some townsmen, whose curiosity induced them to become spectators of this futile attempt, were killed in the action.

“Goldsmith, though not a principal, was present at the transaction, and was publicly admonished for aiding and abetting the riot,—in

* Mr. Crofton Croker is now making an extensive collection of the ballads of Ireland; and it is just possible that by peculiar allusion or phraseology, something of Goldsmith may be detected.

† Communicated by Mr. Webbe, author of “Travels on the Rhine, in Switzerland, and Italy.”

the words of the sentence, *quod seditioni favisset et tumultuantibus opem tulisset.*"

In a portion of the juvenile correspondence of Edmund Burke lately discovered, and of which the writer has to regret he had not the use on a previous occasion, another account of this transaction appears, written by a fellow-student, afterwards the Rev. William Dennis, LL. D., Rector of Dunmore in the diocese of Tuam.* This gentleman was, with a few youthful friends in college named Hamilton, Mohun, Buck, Brennan, and one or two more, a member of the debating society formed by Burke—private in its nature, and meant merely for their own amusement. Many of the exercises, amusements, friendships, and even letters of these youthful associates, seem from a large packet of correspondence still in existence, to have been in common; and their proceedings were communicated in joint letters to Richard Shackleton, son of their former schoolmaster at Ballitore, of which the following is one. The subjects discussed were usually literary—chiefly poetry, criticism, and the drama; and furnish evidence of what the writer has elsewhere advanced,† that the mind of Burke was as active in degree in very early, as in later life. No apology will be necessary for giving the letter at length, although the latter part only relates to our subject; it is illustrative of the characteristics, perhaps the operations, of mind. We find here in juxtaposition the different occupations at the same university, at the same moment, and when nearly of the same age, of Burke and Goldsmith; the sedateness of pursuit, the industry and labour for self-improvement of the future statesman, contrasted with the inconsiderate love of frolic and careless jollity of the future poet; yet both destined to become distinguished ornaments of their country. The first part of the letter, though written by Burke, is not signed by him, this being left for Dennis, who was to conclude it, which he does with a mock heroic account of the riot, as indeed all their communications were couched in a jocular vein. Shackleton's letters in return were likewise addressed to them in common.

"May 28, 1747.

"SCENE I.—BURKE, DENNIS.—*The Club-room.*—DENNIS goes away about some Business.—*Manet BURKE solus.*

"As the committee appointed for the trial of Dennis has just now broke up without doing any thing, for want of members sufficient, I have time enough on my hands to write what you desire—an account of the proceedings of our society since your departure; in which you have been a perfect prophet, for Mohun was formally expelled last lustrum by the censor, Mr. Dennis. After an examination of his conduct from the first foundation of the society, it was

* To this was added that of Clare and Clonshambo, in the diocese of Kildare, through the interest of Burke. The correspondence is in the hands of his grandson, Mr. W. Crawford, now a member of the English Bar, and to whom I am indebted for the perusal of this and many more letters.

† Life of Burke, 2d ed. vol. i. p. 15. and *passim*.

found exceeding bad, without one virtue to redeem it, for which he suffered the above sentence. He was tried some time before (Burke, pres.) for his bad behaviour; but behaved still worse at trial, which brought fresh punishments on him, and at length expulsion. This is not the only revolution in our club. Mr. Buck's conduct much altered for the worse; we seldom see him, for which he has not been spared. Dennis, Hamilton, and your humble — ha! ha! attend constantly; Cardegrif,* as we expected, middling. You all this while are uneasy to know the cause of Dennis's accusation; it is no less than an attempt to overturn this society, by an insolent behaviour to the president and society. I am the accuser; and when you know that, you will tremble for him. I must congratulate you likewise on the censor's minor thanks, which you received with a declaration that had you entered earlier into the society you had been entitled to the grand thanks. The censor gave himself the grand thanks, and the same to me.

"We had, during your absence, the following debates very well handled:—On the Stadtholder—Burke, an oration; lenity to the rebels, a debate—Dennis for, Burke against; Prince of Orange to harangue his troops—Dennis; the sailors in a ship turning pirates—Dennis for, Burke and Hamilton against; Cataline to the Allobroges—Dennis; General Huske for engaging at Falkirk—Burke; Hawley against Dennis; Brutus the First to the Romans—Burke. Hamilton is now president, and a very good one. You use me oddly in your letter; you accuse me of laziness, and what not (though I am likely to fill this *sheet*.) I did not expect this from your friendship, that you should think I would, in your absence, refuse you my company for a few lines, when I attended you in town for many a mile. You behave to me just after the manner that a vile prologue I've read desires the audience to use the actors—'But if you damn, be it discreetly done; flatter us here, and damn us when you're gone' (you see I have not lost my faculty of quoting Grub Street;) just so, when *here* you blarney me; in the country you abuse me; but that shall not hinder me from writing on, for (to show you my Latin) 'tenet insanabile multos scribendi cacoethes.' Come we now to Shar†—the beginning is dark, indeed, but not quite void of connexion, 'for whose good effects, &c.' connects with the first line; all the rest is, properly, between parenthesis. Phæton‡ sells well still; tell me exactly what is said concerning his appearance in print in the country. Miss Cotter‡ is quite charmed with your writings, and more of them would not be disagreeable to that party. I have myself almost finished a piece—an odd one; but you shall not see it until it comes out, if ever: write the rest, Pantagruel, for I can stay no longer;—past nine.—I am now returned, and no Pantagruel.—Your oration on Poverty is, I think, very good, and has

* A name given to one of the party, but to whom does not appear.

† Juvenile productions, the nature of which does not appear. Shackleton and Burke communicated their writings to each other for mutual correction.

‡ Supposed to be the daughter of a bookseller, with whom these young writers were connected in their publications.

in some parts very handsome touches; you shall have the club's opinion next time, which was deferred till we should have a full house. I received your novel, and will read it (and peruse it?) carefully.

(Continuation of the same Letter.)

“Dublin, May 28, 1747.

“DEAR RICHARD, (SHACKLETON.)

“You may be surprised to see the date in the middle of a letter, but I have heard of your resentment at letters not being dated, and I must tell you, though I don't read news, or consult proposals for Grubean works, yet I know the day of the month as well as Burke, who does both, yet does not give an account of it. Now I have got so far upon that important matter of time (for we chronologists are very careful of it,) I'll come to business; and, first, I have prosecuted Mohun (while a private member) with the utmost vigour, and when Censor expelled him; and now for my good services, I am threatened with expulsion by Burke, who is a terrible fellow, and is very active (at getting me punished) in the club, though I have hitherto shown myself a good member. I am now accused of a design of destroying the club (thus modern patriots urge every thing an introduction to popery and slavery which they don't like,) when, alas! no one has a greater desire to preserve it; nay, so strong is it, that though I find in myself a strong desire to keep the chair when I get it, yet my regard for four or five members quells it. The approbation I met with in the Character of Cato (*Censor*) has made me so much the more a stickler for liberty, that not bearing any encroachment on it in our assembly, I am deemed a criminal; and what's worse, my accuser a violent one, and my judge the person whom I have injured; you see the justice.

(Same Letter continued.)

“Friday morning, May 29, (1747.)

“Burke is now writing the proceedings of the assembly, and just saying he'll pass over part of the debates because he is tired; you find he is *semper eadem*; as lazy as you imagined, though I must do him the justice to say he designed writing last night; what prevented it heretofore was our expectation of your first challenge, and likewise Ned (Burke) thought it preposterous to be threshing his brains for you when he is writing for the public; pray laugh heartily now lest you should split when you see the subject he has chosen and the manner he has treated it; but I will not anticipate your pleasure by acquainting you any more.

“I wonder Ned (Burke) did not acquaint you with several important affairs which have happened in town, but I'll supply his place. Jupiter perceiving the days devoted to him* had passed equally disregarded with those of the other gods, was resolved to

* Thursday—Die Jovis—the day of the riot.

make it now more remarkable, for lo! a sudden fury seized the Trinitarians;* and with impetuous haste they poured through all the streets, in hopes to free a wight, by catchpole's powerful hand to durance hard conveyed. Sol, fearful of their swift approach, now * * * was hasting to unyoke his steeds—sure most just it is to call him God of wisdom—for had he staid, what might he not expect from those blades who with victorious arms had now overthrown the myrmidons of Dublin's mighty Lord. Now see the chance of war; the wight who erst in triumph led the hopeless victim to the prison vile, now fell himself a prey to those whose fury heretofore he'd braved; who with Joe as great as when Achilles caught old Priam's murdering son and with relentless fury tied him to his chariot, so they, with fury equal and no less relentless, forced the wretched captive to their own dominions, there spoiled him of his armour, and with force as when the great Hercules the fierce Antæus from the ground uprear'd, then plunged him in the horrid gulf, for catchpoles vile prepared, where no kind nymph or dolphin huge, him bearing might relieve.† Thus plunged in water and in grief, long time he lay. At length his arms uplifting, he implores their kind relief, which they in brief afford, and save the wretched captive from his fate,—but naked led him midst the admiring crowd, to the great building where the varied race of merchants, catchpoles, aldermen and duns, wh——, thieves, and judge fill up the noisy choir. Thus with many a shout victorious marched the glorious youth, till the dun night now warned them to retreat.

“The remainder you must take in plain prose. The mob attempting to force the Black dog,‡ the jailer fired, killed two, and wounded others. Five scholars were expelled for the riot, and five more admonished: so ended an affair which made great noise in the city. Another man was killed since a fighting. Thus a former Thursday was remarkable; and yesterday was signalized by the receipt of your letter and paper, which I like much, but wish you had wrote in quarto; pray write the other so, and send it speedily. Brennen is well, and so is Garret,§ who gives his service to you. Ned desires me to tell you the caps he will send by the next opportunity. Excuse the shortness of this, but I shall be more prolix in my next; till when, believe me your sincere friend and humble servant,

“WILLIAM DENNIS, OR CATO

“THE UNFORTUNATE.

“Ned (Burke) got your letter first and keeps it to join with those he has of yours: he insists I have no right to it, though it was directed to me; pray settle that point in your next.—Adieu,

“SI VALES VALEO.”

* Members of Trinity College.

† Alluding to ducking the sheriff's officers in a great cistern then in the area of Trinity College, as punishment for presuming to arrest a student.

‡ Newgate, it is presumed, from the previous statement of Dr. Wilson. It was then, as appears from other notices of this riot, a dilapidated and insecure building, which accounts for the students attempting to force it.

§ Elder brother of Edmund Burke.

So flagrant a breach of University discipline as this riot proved, and the loss of life by which it was attended, called for the most serious inquiry and punishment. In consequence four of the ring-leaders, (not five, as stated in the preceding account,) were expelled, and four others, something less guilty though prominent in the fray, among whom was Goldsmith, publicly admonished. Such a punishment though not slight at that time, would now preclude the offender from a degree. The following is the sentence passed on this occasion, after noticing the expulsion of the others:—

“Et cum constat insuper Oliverum Goldsmith (three other names are likewise mentioned,) huic seditioni favisse et tumultuantibus opem tulisse visum et præposito et sociis senioribus prædictos Oliverum Goldsmith (cum aliis) publice admonere et hanc admonitionem in album Collegii referri.”

To efface as much as possible the unfavourable impression made by this occurrence, as well as to add to his means of support, he appears to have exerted himself with some effect. In the month following the reprimand, June 15, 1747, he seems to have tried for a scholarship; but, failing in this great object of ambition, was elected an exhibitor on the foundation of Erasmus Smyth; a person who dying in 1669, left a large fortune to charitable uses under the management of the principal official personages of Ireland, and among other bequests, sums for two fellowships and thirty-five exhibitions in the University; twenty being of the larger, and fifteen of the smaller description. Goldsmith's was one of the latter; out of nineteen elected on this occasion, his name stands seventeenth on the list; the emolument was trifling, being no more than about thirty shillings;* but the credit something, for it was the first distinction he had obtained in his college career. It seems, however, to have been but a short time enjoyed. In the September, December, and following March quarters, a cross appears against his name in the books, signifying either suspension or absence in the country, though the former is said to have been the reason; and in June, 1784, it is omitted altogether in the list of exhibitors. The cause is considered to have been an act of venial imprudence mentioned by his sister, and probably produced by joy for the recent honour he had received; so that its celebration would seem to have proved the occasion of its loss.

He had invited a party of young friends of both sexes from the city, to supper and a dance in his chambers, when his tutor hearing of the irregularity proceeded thither, addressed him in gross terms of abuse before his guests, and being probably irritated by the replies of the pupil, at length proceeded to the unwarrantable extremity of personal chastisement. The effect of this violence upon a sensitive mind like that of Goldsmith may be conceived: he thought himself irretrievably disgraced; and with that “exquisite sensibility of con-

* Such would appear to have been the amount at that period, as the Rev. Dr. Sadlier, Librarian of the University did me the favour to point out; but at present (1832) Erasmus Smyth's exhibitions are more valuable; twenty producing 8*l.*, and fifteen 6*l.* per annum.

tempt," of which he speaks on another occasion, determined to forsake not only the scene of his mortification, but his country; and, unknown even to his friends, seek his fortune in a kinder region.

With this view, he disposed of his books and clothes and quitted the University, but loitered in Dublin until with no more than a shilling left, he set out for Cork. His intention was to embark there for some other country, he knew not whither. On this shilling he supported himself, as he affirmed, for three days; and then parting by degrees with his clothes, was at length reduced to such extremity of famine, that after fasting twenty-four hours, he thought a handful of gray peas given him by a girl at a wake, the most comfortable repast he had ever made. Fatigue and privation produced what, perhaps, persuasion might not have effected,—conviction of his folly and imprudence. The project of going to America (for this seemed his destination) was therefore for the present abandoned; his steps turned gradually homeward; and when near enough to communicate with his brother, he sent forward a messenger to announce his situation; and Henry, who immediately went to the assistance of the wanderer, clothed and carried him back to college, where something of a reconciliation was attempted with the tutor.

It is not to be supposed this was very cordial or permanent: he who descends to personal outrage on a youth nearly of man's estate will scarcely forgive the object of his violence; nor will the latter look for a friend or instructor in one whom he must consider as a tyrant. These feelings, no doubt, operated in the minds of both: the pupil became despondent, and if not sulky, indifferent probably to applause or censure; while the tutor, irritated by what he deemed neglect or dislike, persecuted him, as we learn from Dr. Wilson and others, at the quarterly examinations by sarcastic taunts or ironical praises, galling in the extreme to a youth of sensibility. One of the scenes to which this mutual aversion gave rise was related by his friend Mr. Beatty a witness on the occasion; and it is characteristic of others which occurred in the public intercourse of the tutor not with one only but several of his pupils.

While lecturing his class in the spring of 1748, he desired Goldsmith to explain the centre of gravity, which however he was unable to do. The former then went through a formal explanation, and when he had finished, sternly called out, "Now blockhead, where is *your* centre of gravity?" Annoyed by the terms of the reproof, and probably desirous of indulging his humour at the expense of the lecturer's dignity, Oliver in his usual slow, hollow tone of enunciation, after the preface of "Why, doctor, by your definition, I think it must be somewhere——" added a term too coarse for repetition. This totally discomposed the gravity of all the auditors, and excited not unreasonably the anger of their instructor, who, after a severe rebuke for ignorance and impertinence, turned him down to the bottom of the class. This anecdote which was often told in conversation to Bishop Percy is confirmed by a memorandum recently discovered by the writer in the senior lecturer's book under the

date of May 9th, 1748; where it is briefly recorded, "Goldsmith turned down."

The other memoranda relating to him in the University books are few: twice he is "cautioned" for neglecting Greek lecture, and thrice commended for diligence in attending it, or in the phrase used on such occasions, "receives the thanks of the house." In the buttery books the fines against him are numerous, though not more so than are affixed to the names of many others, and all very trifling in amount; his general conduct therefore does not seem to have been marked, in the opinion of the high college authority who obligingly rendered his aid in the search for these particulars, by any unusual irregularity. He was said by Dr. Michael Kearney, a contemporary during the last year of residence and afterwards fellow of the college to have gained a premium at a Christmas examination; which being more strict than others, is considered the most honourable of any given during the year. But, after a diligent examination, no trace of this honour is to be found; the fact nevertheless, may have been as stated; for the Doctor was considered good authority, and some of the records of that period are mislaid. The probable year was 1748; for in the preceding Christmas quarter, his exhibition, as we have seen, was suspended, and in that of 1746 he had been cautioned on the subject of Greek lecture.

The records which supply these notices, slight though not uninteresting in their details, furnish evidence of the diligence and success which attended his friend Beatty; who in mentioning the misadventures of the poet, seldom adverted to his own merits or distinctions obtained when a fellow student. These appear to have been numerous; his name is constantly to be found among those commended for diligence; he receives a premium when poor Goldsmith is "turned down;" and certificates, considered as substitutes for other premiums, were awarded on other occasions. Yet, how capricious are the ultimate distribution of fame! Beatty thus commended and successful, entered into the church, encountered no material difficulties in life, found his sphere, perhaps, circumscribed by the useful though unostentatious duties of a parish priest, and though always known as a clever man, found no inducement to come before the world as a candidate for further distinction. While Goldsmith sometimes idle, sometimes neglected or noticed only to be censured, pursuing, it may be said, no certain calling, a wanderer for no inconsiderable portion of his life, friendless and long obscure, living in difficulties and dying in them, has left a reputation which promises to be unfading. Contracts of this kind have given rise to the common though inconsiderate censure applied to colleges, for not better discriminating the characters of youth; as if discrimination were at such time practicable to any sagacity. Besides, circumstances so continually modify or even create talent, that all the practical conclusion we can draw is, not hastily to attempt to gauge the exact dimensions of youthful intellect.

When free from the influence of indolence or despondency, and no longer seen "lounging about the college gate," in the words of a

contemporary, (Dr. Wolfen), he seems not to have neglected a talent for poetry. Instances of this appear to have been remembered by that gentleman and others; being partly original compositions of a light description, or translations from the classics: these, like other college exercises, when not preserved by the party themselves, interested no one else, and were forgotten with the occasion. In allusion to this poetical talent and when the fact would have been readily known by inquiry, he many years afterwards told Mr. Malone in London, when conversing about the University, that "though he made no great figure in mathematics, which was a study much in repute there, he could turn an ode of Horace into English better than any of them." To this date is assigned the translation from Macrobius, which appeared in the first edition (1759) of the *Inquiry into Polite Learning in Europe*. It is likewise believed that at this time was sketched the tale of the "Double Transformation," which appears in his works, commencing,—

" Secluded from domestic strife,
Jack Bookworm led a college life :
A fellowship at twenty-five
Made him the happiest man alive.
He drank his glass and crack'd his joke,
And freshmen wondered as he spoke."

For in the original draught the following allusion, afterwards omitted, occurs to the adventure for which he received the public admonition—

" And told the tales oft told before,
Of bailiff's pump'd and proctors bit,
At college how he showed his wit."

At the period of quitting college and selling his books in consequence of the tutor's assault upon him, his Greek Lexicon, no doubt as being of some value, was among the number. This volume, Scapula's folio, the writer has every reason to believe is now in his possession; the gift of a lady whose scholarship is among the least of her merits, whose piety is as unfeigned as her philanthropy is extensive, and in whom the unostentatious charities of Dublin find one of their most persevering and zealous supporters.* By the account of this lady it appears that, when in search of a lexicon several years ago, she met with it on the stall of an illiterate bookseller, who however placed some additional value on the volume from the autographs of the Poet, of which there are more than a dozen scattered in the margins, and bearing every mark of being his handwriting. Some are simply his name; others in imitation of the then style of franking are marked "Free, Oliver Goldsmith;" one

* Miss K——, whose name the writer would have pleasure in giving at length, were he not apprehensive of offending that female reserve which frequently renders us unable to bestow by name due praise on the greatest benefactors of our species.

or two containing certain promises more familiar to him than that of the assumed parliamentary privilege, namely, "*I promise to pay, &c. &c.*, Oliver Goldsmith;" all indicative of what we may conceive to have been his employment in an idle or musing mood. Few details of the history of this volume could be given at the time of the purchase, and even these are forgotten, excepting that it had passed through one or two other hands; the title page is wanting, and it bears traces of very venerable age. From the expensive nature of the work, it had probably been the gift of his uncle Goldsmith, and used by him when in the same retreat of learning.

The poor are commonly said to be improvident; and Goldsmith by all accounts failed to manage his scanty finances with the care that his necessities required; an imprudent benevolence as it would seem to distressed objects proving the cause of serious inconvenience to himself. Illustrative of this point of character, Mr. Edward Mills of Mount Prospect in Roscommon, his relative, and who entered college about two years after him, told a ludicrous story which, though obviously exaggerated, may have had some foundation in truth: he was a professed wit and punster, and therefore the anecdote probably lost nothing in the narration; it may likewise owe something to the whim of the Poet, whose humour was sometimes sufficiently broad and practical.

Mills, whose family in Roscommon was opulent, possessing a handsome allowance at the University, occasionally furnished his relative with small supplies and frequently invited him to breakfast. On being summoned on one occasion to this repast, he declared from within to the messenger his inability to rise, and that to enable him to do so they must come to his assistance, by forcing open the door. This was accordingly done by Mills; who found his cousin not *on* his bed, but literally *in* it, having ripped part of the ticking and immersed himself in the feathers, from which situation, as alleged, he found difficulty in extricating himself. By his own account in explanation of this strange scene, after the merriment which it occasioned had subsided, it appeared that while strolling in the suburbs the preceding evening, he met a poor woman with five children, who told a pitiful story of her husband being in the hospital, and herself and offspring destitute of food, and of a place of shelter for the night; and that being from the country, they knew no person to whom under such circumstances they could apply with hope of relief. The appeal to one of his sensitive disposition was irresistible; but unfortunately he had no money. In this situation he brought her to the college gate, sent out his blankets to cover the wretched group, and part of his clothes in order to sell for their present subsistence; and finding himself cold during the night from want of the usual covering, had hit upon the expedient just related for supplying the place of his blankets.

The substance of this story will scarcely be thought improbable, when we know that on several occasions in future life he reduced himself, from similar motives, to equal inconvenience; though he saw and felt and had resolution to stigmatize his imprudence at the very

moment he was guilty of it. His justice through life seems to have maintained a constant though ineffectual contest with his generosity; none could read more impressive lessons on prudence, or practise them less, even against his conviction. "Frugality, and even avarice, in the lower orders of mankind," he writes to his brother, in 1759, "are true ambition. These afford the only ladder for the poor to rise to preferment. Teach then, my dear Sir, to your son, thrift and economy: let his poor wandering uncle's example be placed before his eyes." Much more in the same strain will be found in a subsequent letter.

"Misers," he says in an essay written in the same year, when it will be seen that he had suffered from the neglect of his own maxims, "are generally characterized as men without honour or without humanity, who live only to accumulate, and to this passion sacrifice every other happiness. They have been described as madmen, who, in the midst of abundance, banish every pleasure, and make from imaginary wants real necessities. But few, very few, correspond to this exaggerated picture; and perhaps there is not one in whom all these circumstances are united. Instead of this, we find the sober and industrious branded by the vain and the idle with this odious appellation; men who, by frugality and labour, raise themselves above their equals, and contribute their share of industry to the common stock."*

Full of the subject, he returns to it in another paper of the Bee; and the exhortations are so earnest as to impress the belief of the most consummate prudence in him who could state its advantages so eloquently:

"The ancient Romans, more rational than we in this particular (their estimation of frugality,) were very far from misplacing their admiration or praise: instead of regarding the practice of parsimony as low or vicious, they made it synonymous even with probity. They esteemed those virtues so inseparable, that the known expression of *Vir Frugi* signified at one and the same time, a sober and managing man, an honest man, and a man of substance." Not yet satisfied with admonitions, meant to impress his convictions in the strongest manner, he recurs a fourth time to the same theme, which seems at this period to have possessed his mind in the spirit of determined economy; but it is not necessary to quote his sentiments at length here. Were not principle and practice constantly seen at variance in the conduct of the wisest men, it would be difficult to conceive how such a man could be improvident.

On the 27th of February, 1749, he was admitted to the degree of Bachelor of Arts. Mr. Malone first ascertained the date from the communication of Dr. Wilson; but on subsequent search being made, the official document could not be found: doubts were consequently entertained of the accuracy of the statement, and belief generally

* See Works, vol. i., Bee, No. III.

† Ibid. No. V.

expressed that he had never taken a degree at all; though it now appears without cause.

His name was first found by the present writer in the list of such as had right of access to the college library, to which by the rules graduates only are admissible, and who previous to admission write their names in a volume kept for that purpose. Pursuing the inquiry, by permission of the college authorities, he was shown by the Rev. Dr. Phibbs, the registrar, the original record; where in this his final connexion with the University, his name appears last upon the list of those who acquired a similar degree on the same day, as it is last in the list of sizers on the day of entering it.*

Misled by hasty examination of the records, Dr. Wilson, in the communication to Malone already mentioned, concluded that the degree had been obtained two years after the regular time; but this is likewise a mistake. On reference to dates it will be found that his period of residence was no more than four years; and on further inquiry of the heads of the University, they agreed that he had been admitted in due course.

The attainment of this distinction, all that he now expected or sought from his college, caused a speedy return to the country,—not indisposed to quit a scene of which the mortifications, in his estimate, counterbalanced some of the advantages. His career while there was considered at home a failure; his father had lived to witness only a partial frustration of his hopes; and although Mr. Contarine, as his daughter Mrs. Lawder very well remembered, still formed a good opinion of his talents, it was otherwise with many of his nearest connexions, who from the straitened circumstances of his mother, left nearly destitute herself, found their generosity occasionally taxed for his support. To this feeling there is obvious allusion, as Mrs. Hodson acknowledged, in one of the papers in the “Citizen of the World,” where, under the character of the Man in Black, he adverts, with characteristic love of family history, to this period of his life, and to his distaste for mathematics:

“The first opportunity he (his father) had of finding his expectations disappointed, was in the middling figure I made at the University: he had flattered himself that he should soon see me rising into the foremost rank in literary reputation, but was mortified to find me utterly unnoticed and unknown. His disappointment might have been partly ascribed to his having overrated my talents, and partly to my dislike of mathematical reasonings, at a time when my imagination and memory, yet unsatisfied, were more eager after new objects, than desirous of reasoning upon those I knew. This however did not please my tutors, who observed indeed that I was a little dull; but at the same time allowed, that I seemed to be very *good-natured*, and had no harm in me.”†

* At that period the names were often written by the librarian; and the Rev. Dr. Sadlier, who now fills that office, and did me the favour to assist in the search, believes that the name is not an autograph, but, from similarity to others, written by his predecessor of that day.

† Letter xxvii. See Works, vol. ii.

To this very amiable father, the son, by his power in the delineation of character, has given celebrity in three of his sketches; one in the paper just quoted; a second in Dr. Primrose, in the "Vicar of Wakefield;" and a third as the family always stated, in reference to his spiritual character, in the Preacher in the "Deserted Village." Each has peculiarities that distinguish it from the other, yet touched so skilfully, that with some variation, they cannot be said to offer a contradiction. By traditional notices gleaned from his descendants and in the neighbourhood, before all who had known him personally had passed away, he appears to have been one of that numerous class in Ireland who, with very warm hearts, want counterbalancing discretion to keep within the rules of necessary prudence; who are benevolent as much from impulse as principle; hospitable, sometimes at the expense of their families; and prone from this national propensity or weakness, to prize the reputation of generosity above more thriving virtues. He was learned, sincere, of simple manners, but possessed of little knowledge of the world beyond the sphere of his calling and the rural affairs of the vicinity; and to a deception practised upon him at the fair of Athlone, in some unthrifty bargain, is ascribed the origin of the story of Moses and the green spectacles.

Inattention to worldly matters, a certain eccentricity of character, and inability to get forward in life, seem to have characterized the Goldsmith race; for in conversing with three of its branches, in as many different quarters of Ireland, the remark of each ran in nearly the same words:—"The Goldsmiths were always a strange family; they rarely acted like other people: their hearts were always in the right place, but their heads seemed to be doing any thing but what they ought." A competent authority, resident in the neighbourhood, made a similar observation, when communicating some traditional notices of the poet twenty-five years ago; and the remark is said to hold good to the present time:—"Several of the family and name," writes this gentleman, "live near Elphin, who as well as the Poet, were and are remarkable for their worth, but of no cleverness in the affairs of the world."*

In the sketch of his father, in the history of the "Man in Black," it will be observed how tenderly the son touches upon the parental or family failing of improvidence, which is made almost to "lean to Virtue's side;" and in writing it, he probably meant to apologize for that disregard of the maxims of prudence in himself, arising from an overflow of benevolence, which we may thus be induced to believe had its origin in paternal example:—

"My father, the younger son of a good family, was possessed of a small living in the church. His education was above his fortune, and his generosity greater than his education. Poor as he was, he had his flatterers still poorer than himself: for every dinner he gave

* The Rev. Dr. Streat; in an "Essay on Light Reading," by the Rev. Ed. Mangin. This intelligent clergyman furnished several suggestions likewise to the writer, for which he is obliged. The name of Goldsmith is now, as is said by some of its branches, extinct in that neighbourhood, Elphin, but several relatives by the female branches remain.

them, they returned him an equivalent in praise; and this was all he wanted. The same ambition that actuates a monarch at the head of his army, influenced my father at the head of his table: he told the story of the ivy-tree, and that was laughed at; he repeated the jest of the two scholars and one pair of breeches, and the company laughed at that; but the story of Taffy in the sedan-chair was sure to set the table in a roar. Thus his pleasure increased in proportion to the pleasure he gave; he loved all the world; and he fancied all the world loved him.

"As his fortune was but small, he lived up to the very extent of it: he had no intention of leaving his children money, for that was dross; he was resolved they should have learning, for learning he used to observe, was better than silver or gold. For this purpose he undertook to instruct us himself, and took as much care to form our morals as to prove our understanding. We were told that universal benevolence was what first cemented society: we were taught to consider all the wants of mankind as our own; to regard the *human face divine* with affection and esteem; he wound us up to be mere machines of pity, and rendered us incapable of withstanding the slightest impulse made either by real or fictitious distress. In a word, we were perfectly instructed in the art of giving away thousands, before we were taught the more necessary qualifications of getting a farthing."

However disposed to quit the University, Oliver found little to allure him to the country; the pecuniary circumstances of his nearest connexions enabling them to do little more than afford him a temporary home. Mr. and Mrs. Hodson lived in the house at Lissoy after the death of his father. His mother remained there also for a time; but removing soon afterwards to Ballymahon, occupied a small house, (still an object of interest to visitors, forming one corner of the road to Edgworthstown,) and survived about twenty years, as would appear, in very confined circumstances.* Henry, the clergyman, who served the curacy of his late father's parish and whose school was at this period limited, lived at the original family residence of Pallas; as appears by the copy of a

* My friend, the Rev. Mr Graham, supplies the following note, first printed in Mr. Shaw Mason's "Statistical Survey:"

"The writer of this account purchased some old papers several years ago, at an auction in Ballymahon, and among them an account-book, kept by a Mrs. Edwards and a Miss Shore, who lived in the next house to Mrs. Goldsmith. In this village record were several shop accounts, from the year 1740 to 1756. Some of the entries, in the earliest of these accounts, ran thus:—Tea by Master Noll!—Cash by ditto!—from which it appears, that Oliver was his mother's principal messenger. One of the accounts, in 1756, may be considered a curiosity, ascertaining the use and the price of green tea in this part of the country nearly eighty years ago.

"Mrs. Goldsmith to Sarah Shore, Dr.

Brought forward	-	-	-	-	-	0	15	5
Jan. 16. Half an ounce of green tea	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	3½
A quarter of a pound of lump sugar	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	3½
A pound of Jamaica sugar	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	8
An ounce of green tea	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	7
Half a pound of rice	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	2
A quarter of an ounce of green tea	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	2"

deed in the Registry of Dublin, stating that "the Rev. Henry Goldsmith, Clerk, of Pallismore in the County of Longford, as eldest son and heir-at-law of the late Charles Goldsmith, confirms to Daniel Hodson the lands assigned to him by his late father, in lieu of the marriage portion with his daughter Catherine." It bears date December 13th and 14th, 1750.

For about two years, according to the verbal account given by Mrs. Hodson to the Rev. Mr. Handcock in 1790, the future poet "Having no fixed object in view, continued visiting about among his friends," which may have tended to render habits naturally careless, still more unsettled and irregular. Occasionally he is said to have assisted his brother in his school, the only return in his power to make for unintermitted protection and friendship; but to one of his temperament, an effort of no ordinary resolution. To this first initiation into the drudgery of teaching, was probably owing that disgust to the exercise of a profession honourable in itself, which he ever afterwards felt and hesitated not to avow, although compelled to resort to it as the means of subsistence when thrown upon his own resources. At Lissoy he likewise spent a considerable portion of time, entering into the rural sports and occupations of his brother-in-law with the usual ardour of a young and unoccupied mind. Through life he preserved the fondest attachment to this spot; often revisiting it, as he said, in imagination, although restrained by circumstances he could not control, from realizing in person what memory delighted to retrace; and indeed a man of warm affections looks back upon few things with more satisfaction than the scenes and the friends of his youth. One of his subsequent letters enters strongly into these feelings: he remembers his acquaintance and country, he says, with the strongest affection,—yet stops to ask why this is,—when from the one he experienced no more than common civility, and from the other brought nothing away but his brogue and his blunders? On the same occasion he alludes, in a strain of fond recollection, to the scenery around Lissoy, presenting, he warmly says, "the most pleasing horizon in nature."

Under the influence of similar feelings and nearly in the same language as in these letters, he commences one of his *Essays*; the locality though not expressly named, will be immediately obvious to the reader:—

"When I reflect on the unambitious retirement in which I passed the earlier part of my life in the country, I cannot avoid feeling some pain in thinking that those happy days are never to return. In that retreat all nature seemed capable of affording pleasure: I then made no refinements on happiness, but could be pleased with the most awkward efforts of rustic mirth; thought cross-purposes the highest stretch of human wit; and questions and commands the most rational way of spending the evening. Happy could so charming an illusion still continue! I find that age and knowledge only contribute to sour our dispositions. My present enjoyments may be more refined, but they are infinitely less pleasing. The

pleasure the best actor gives, can no way compare to that I have received from a country wag who imitated a quaker's sermon. The music of the finest singer is dissonance to what I felt when our old dairy-maid sung me into tears with Johnny Armstrong's last Good Night, or the cruelty of Barbara Allen."*

In conversation he has been known to refer to this spot with something of pride as his family residence : and in his writings, on more than one occasion, felt pleasure in recalling a scene where his father had fed the hungry, and sometimes lodged the houseless. The "Deserted Village" points to the exertion of this benevolence in several points of view ; while the "Vicar of Wakefield," in describing his abode and the inmates to whom it formed an occasional home, is made to advert to it in others ; the resort of idle and poor relatives, or of those who claim to be such, to families raised a little above them in condition, will be familiar to all acquainted with Ireland, in the following sketch :—

"As we lived near the road, we often had the traveller or stranger visit us to taste our gooseberry wine, for which we had great reputation ; and I profess, with the veracity of an historian, that I never knew one of them find fault with it. Our cousins, too, even to the fortieth remove, all remembered their affinity without the help of the herald's office, and came very frequently to see us. Some of them did us no great honour by these claims of kindred ; as we had the blind, the maimed, and the halt amongst the number. However, my wife always insisted that, as they were the same *flesh and blood*, they should sit with us at the same table. So that if we had not very rich, we generally had very happy friends about us ; for this remark will hold good through life, that the poorer the guest, the better pleased he ever is with being treated ; and as some men gaze with admiration at the colours of a tulip, or the wing of a butterfly, so I was by nature an admirer of happy faces.

"However, when any one of our relations was found to be a person of very *bad* character, a troublesome guest, or one we desired to get rid of, upon his leaving my house I ever took care to lend him a riding-coat, or a pair of boots, or sometimes a horse of small value ; and I always had the satisfaction of finding he never came back to return them. By this the house was cleared of such as we did not like ; but never was the family of Wakefield known to turn the traveller or the poor dependant out of doors."†

* See Works, vol. i., Bee, No. II.

† See Works, vol. iii. Vicar of Wakefield, chap. i.

CHAPTER IV.

Declines to take Orders.—Ballymahon.—Accepts a Tutorship.—Travels to Cork.
—Reputed Poetical attempts.—Adopts the Profession of Physic.—Edinburgh.—
Mr. Lachlan Maclean.

GOLDSMITH's family, desirous of securing a respectable profession as well as provision for one without either, wished him to take orders under the belief that they could advance him in the church; but to this he felt a settled repugnance. "For the clerical profession," said Mrs. Hodson, "he had no liking; having always a strong inclination for visiting foreign countries."

The real motives, judging from sentiments expressed in future life, and which he probably did not now think proper to disclose, appear to have been conscientious conviction of being unfitted by temperament for the sacred office, and a consequent dislike to undertake the performance of duties which he knew he wanted the requisite inclination to fulfil. All men, even such as are estimable in many respects, are not necessarily fitted for clergymen; they should be naturally disposed toward the calling, and not the calling made matter of convenience to their families or to themselves. So high an opinion had he formed of the purity of conduct necessary to such as attempted to admonish or to instruct their fellows from the sacred volume, that at a late period of life, as will be hereafter seen, when even requested to read prayers in a private family, he declined with the remark, "that he did not deem himself good enough."

At length, induced by the persuasions of Mr. Contarine, whom it would have been ingratitude to disobey, he presented himself before the Bishop of Elphin, Dr. Synge, for ordination, and by the account of his sister, was rejected on the plea of being too young. The tradition in the diocese is, that he had neglected the proper professional studies, and that an exaggerated statement had reached the Bishop of his irregularities at College; while Dr. Streatalludes to a rumour, not at all improbable from his thoughtlessness and reputed love of gay dress, of some prejudice being formed against him from appearing before the Bishop in scarlet breeches. Whatever was the cause of rejection, he does not seem to have made a second attempt: the first he probably supposed enough to satisfy his friends; and the result did not displease himself, in escaping from what he considered the restraints of a clerical life. One of these restraints, frivolous no doubt and boyish as he afterwards considered it, was dislike to the usual dress of the profession; and in the paper already mentioned in the "Citizen of the World," it is thus alluded to:—

"After I had resided at college seven years, my father died and left me —— his blessing. Thus shoved from shore, without ill-

nature to protect, or cunning to guide, or proper stores to subsist me in so dangerous a voyage, I was obliged to embark in the wide world at twenty-two. But, in order to settle in life, my friends *advised* (for they always advise, when they begin to despise us,) they advised me, I say, to go into orders.

"To be obliged to wear a long wig when I liked a short one, or a black coat when I generally dressed in brown, I thought was such a restraint upon my liberty, that I absolutely rejected the proposal. A priest in England is not the same mortified creature with a bonze in China. * * I rejected a life of luxury, indolence, and ease, from no other consideration than that boyish one of dress. So that my friends were now perfectly satisfied I was undone; and yet they thought it a pity, for one that had not the least harm in him, and was so very *good-natured*."

The vicinity of Ballymahon to his usual places of residence carried him frequently thither, to enjoy such society as a small town in a rude district of country afforded. The province of Connaught and its borders have been always considered, even in Ireland, backward and unpromising; the land in many places for miles together, sterile; cultivation where it exists, imperfect; the houses of the gentry fewer in number and more widely scattered than in the other provinces; and the people less advanced in the arts, comforts, and knowledge of civilised life. There was at the period in question, still more traces of Celtic manners and peculiarities among them than at present; much simplicity, hospitality, and pride, mingled with habits of a ruder kind, little intercourse with strangers, defective education, and little appreciation of the advantages of literature. He adverts to the state of society as he found it, in one of his letters; inquiring why "he should be fond of a spot where the country is not fine and the company not good; where vivacity is supported by some humble cousin who has just folly enough to earn his dinner; and where more money has been spent in the encouragement of the Padareen mare* (a celebrated racer of that day) in one season, than given in rewards to learned men since the times of Usher."

In society thus characterized, although mingling with it, despised, he is said to have indulged in the usual propensities of a young man of lively imagination, but destitute of the consideration necessary to guide him in the business of life. Conscious of the possession of superior talents, of which, it is said, occasional proofs were given, and ambitious of being at the head of his company, his companions very willingly tendered their admiration in return for his efforts to please. "George Conway's Inn," mentioned in one of his letters, which stood and still stands, though shorn of its honours by rival establishments, opposite the residence of his mother, had more of his time

* In ridiculing national characteristics, in supposed extracts from a newspaper (Citizen of the World, Letter V.), he again alludes to the same topic. "Dublin.—We hear that there is a benevolent subscription on foot among the nobility and gentry of this kingdom, who are great patrons of merit, in order to assist Black and all Black in his contest with the Padareen mare."

than his brother thought becoming or prudent. Without being seriously open to the charge of dissipation, the attractions of a convivial evening were strong enough to draw him from more sober pursuits. This inn formed the scene of some of his triumphs over more unlettered opponents: here he delighted to argue, to exhibit his classical attainments and general learning, to quote verses and occasionally to write them; and when they ceased to be attractive, he found equal pleasure in amusing his party by telling a story or singing a song. He seems to have been naturally, as he says of one of his characters, "an admirer of happy human faces," and with his gay and joyous spirit, so long as he saw the effect, did not much study the means by which it was produced. All this, though it did not corrupt his heart, tended to deteriorate his manners. It imparted that tinge of what afterwards, in the societies of London, some rather harshly termed uncouthness, but which might have been more appropriately named rusticity. It possibly fostered that passion for applause also laid to his charge in future life, yet inseparable from a man of talents; and no doubt tended to impair habits of order, regularity and steady application. From some of the scenes in which he mingled in Ballymahon and its vicinity, and the peculiar circumstances of his life for some years afterwards, often cast into society which he felt to be far beneath him, it is believed he drew the first idea of *Tony Lumpkin*; leaving much necessarily to be filled up by comic exaggeration and invention. Yet such scenes could not be without their use to so good a painter of humor and character; to profit by them is the province of genius; and in one of his prefaces we are expressly told, that "in pursuing humour it will sometimes lead us into the recesses of the mean."

There is reason to believe that at this time he followed no systematic plan of study. Traditionary accounts represent his favourite and almost constant reading to have been of the miscellaneous and amusing kind; chiefly biography, travels, poetry, novels, and plays: Eastern adventures and fictions took strong hold on his imagination, and were supposed by his family to have occasioned in part, the desire long entertained but never gratified of visiting those countries in person. But our own fictitious and romantic narratives became one of his chief sources of interest, first impressing, as he confessed afterwards with strong regret, as if more than ordinarily pernicious, erroneous ideas of life; a common occurrence in youthful minds of every description, and with such as are most ingenious the most. It is perhaps but a natural result, that none should be more alive to such impressions than those who possess and are fated to exercise the power of producing them in others.

"Above all things," he writes to his brother, some years afterwards, regarding the education of his son, "let him never touch a romance or novel; those paint beauty in colours more charming than nature, and describe happiness that man never tastes. How delusive, how destructive are those pictures of consummate bliss!"

The respectable families in Ballymahon were not numerous. One of these, in which he spent many agreeable hours and by whom he

was remembered with affectionate interest, was that of Mr. Robert Bryanton, his companion in school and in college,* now an associate in his pleasures, and to whom he afterwards addressed several letters when absent from Ireland, disclosing his situation and prospects with even less reserve than to his own family. Two only of these remain in possession of the descendants of that gentleman; they breathe the warmest regard for him and his relatives; and in the postscript to one he even adds, after expressing attachment to its members—"If there be a favourite dog in the family, let me be remembered to him."

In company with this gentleman, besides their convivial scenes to which slight allusion is made in the same letter, he made frequent excursions on foot through the country; sometimes for the purpose of shooting, sometimes to fish in the course of the river Inny, which flows through the town, and with a few green islets and the ruins of a mill, then in full activity, presents a pretty picturesque scene. Ballymulvey, an agreeable house and grounds in the vicinity and afterwards the residence for some years of his friend Bryanton, was a frequent resort. Here, by the river side, he is said to have amused himself with his flute; and here likewise and in the neighbouring pieces of water communicating with the Shannon, as well as in the course of that river, sometimes joined or led an otter hunt; for (speaking of that animal) he says in *Animated Nature*, "With us, its young are never found till the latter end of summer; and I have frequently, when a boy, discovered their retreats and hunted them at that season." In this vicinity also at the house of a gentleman named Gannon, he gained his only actual acquaintance with the seal tribe as mentioned in the same work—"How long this animal lives is unknown: a gentleman whom I knew in Ireland kept two of them, which he had taken very young, in his house for ten years; and they appeared to have the marks of age at the time I saw them, for they were grown gray about the muzzle." One of the rustic exercises pursued by him as a source of amusement was throwing the sledge, a common feat of strength and activity in Ireland; and a blacksmith who boasted to the Rev. Mr. Handcock of having taught him the art, still survived about the year 1787.

His uncle Contarine, to whom he paid frequent visits in Roscommon, at length procured him the situation of tutor in the family of a gentleman in that county, whose name, as communicated by Mrs. Hodson to Mr. Handcock though not to Bishop Percy, was Flinn. In what light he considered himself here, whether in the character of tutor or flatterer, is doubtful; for either to this period, or to a visit paid as tradition reports to his relative, Dr. Goldsmith, Dean of Cloyne, he is supposed to allude in the following passage from the story of the *Man in Black*. If the visit to the Dean ever really took place, it was, we are certain, unsatisfactory to him; but that some

* "1746 Novembris 18^o. Robertus Bryanton Pens.—Filius Ricardi Gener.—Annum agens 15—Natus in Comitatu Longford:—Educatus sub ferula Mr. Hynes (Hughes)—Tutor Mr. Wilder." *College Register*.

circumstance of this kind had made a strong impression on his mind, appears from a similar notice in the story of George Primrose, and again in allusion to the situation of Thornhill after his disgrace, in the same tale:—

“Poverty naturally begets dependence, and I was admitted as flatterer to a great man. At first I was surprised that the situation of a flatterer at a great man’s table could be thought disagreeable; there was no great trouble in listening attentively when his lordship spoke, and laughing when he looked round for applause. This even good manners might have obliged me to perform. I found, however, too soon, that his lordship was a greater dunce than myself; and from that very moment flattery was at an end. I now rather aimed at setting him right, than at receiving his absurdities with submission. To flatter those we do not know is an easy task; but to flatter our intimate acquaintances, all whose foibles are strongly in our eye, is drudgery insupportable. Every time I now opened my lips in praise, my falsehood went to my conscience. His lordship soon perceived me to be very unfit for service; I was therefore discharged; my patron at the same time being graciously pleased to observe, that he believed I was tolerably good natured, and had not the least harm in me.”

In the family of Mr. Flinn he remained about a year, and becoming tired of the confinement consequent on the situation, quitted it with the determination to go abroad. Such was Mrs. Hodson’s account to Bishop Percy. Her verbal statement to the Rev. Mr. Handcock, in 1790, attributes his immediate removal to an altercation with one of the family, in consequence of sitting down to cards on the receipt of his salary, and by a train of ill luck, or as he did not hesitate to say by unfair play, losing the sum that had been paid him. Securing, however, according to her account though it does not appear from what quarter, about thirty pounds and a good horse, he quitted the country, none of his family knew whither.

At the end of six weeks he unexpectedly returned, destitute of money or the horse on which he set out, but provided with an inferior animal facetiously denominated by him Fiddleback. In reply to the anxious inquiries of his friends, he gave the following account of his adventures; first verbally, and then in a letter to his mother, who had expressed some doubts of its truth, and to whom he said with characteristic simplicity on observing her coolness, “And now, my dear mother, after having struggled so hard to come home to you, I wonder you are not more rejoiced to see me.”

The original of this letter is not to be found; but a copy seems to have been in the possession of Mrs. Hodson, who communicated the material facts in the memoranda furnished of the early portion of her brother’s life. It is now in the possession of the gentleman who holds the original manuscript memoir, and was probably sent by her at a subsequent period.

“MY DEAR MOTHER,

“If you will sit down and calmly listen to what I say, you shall

be fully resolved in every one of those many questions you have asked me. I went to Cork and converted my horse, which you prize so much higher than Fiddleback, into cash, took my passage in a ship bound for America, and, at the same time, paid the captain for my freight and all the other expenses of my voyage. But it so happened that the wind did not answer for three weeks; and you know, mother, that I could not command the elements. My misfortune was that when the wind served I happened to be with a party in the country, and my friend the captain never inquired after me, but set sail with as much indifference as if I had been on board. The remainder of my time I employed in the city and its environs, viewing every thing curious, and you know no one can starve while he has money in his pocket.

"Reduced, however, to my last two guineas, I began to think of my dear mother and friends whom I had left behind me, and so bought that generous beast Fiddleback and bade adieu to Cork with only five shillings in my pocket. This to be sure was but a scanty allowance for man and horse towards a journey of above an hundred miles; but I did not despair, for I knew I must find friends on the road.

"I recollected particularly an old and faithful acquaintance I made at college, who had often and earnestly pressed me to spend a summer with him, and he lived but eight miles from Cork.* This circumstance of vicinity he would expatiate on to me with particular emphasis.—'We shall,' says he, 'enjoy the delights of both city and country, and you shall command my stable and my purse.'

"However upon the way I met a poor woman all in tears, who told me her husband had been arrested for a debt he was not able to pay, and that his eight children must now starve, bereaved as they were of his industry, which had been their only support. I thought myself at home, being not far from my good friend's house, and therefore parted with a moiety of all my store; and pray, mother, ought I not to have given her the other half-crown, for what she got would be of little use to her?—However I soon arrived at the mansion of my affectionate friend, guarded by the vigilance of a huge mastiff, who flew at me and would have torn me to pieces, but for the assistance of a woman whose countenance was not less grim than that of the dog; yet she with great humanity relieved me from the jaws of this Cerberus, and was prevailed on to carry up my name to her master.

"Without suffering me to wait long, my old friend, who was then recovering from a severe fit of sickness, came down in his night-cap, night-gown and slippers, and embraced me with the most cordial welcome, showed me in, and after giving me a history of his indisposition, assured me that he considered himself peculiarly fortunate in having under his roof the man he most loved on the earth, and whose stay with him must, above all things, contribute to

* Almost the exact distance of Cloyne; but had this been the reported visit to the Dean, we should probably have had a more distinct clue to the fact.

perfect his recovery. I now repented sorely I had not given the poor woman the other half-crown, as I thought all my bills of humanity would be punctually answered by this worthy man. I revealed to him my whole soul; I opened to him all my distresses; and freely owned that I had but one half-crown in my pocket, but that now, like a ship after weathering out the storm, I considered myself secure in a safe and hospitable harbour. He made no answer, but walked about the room, rubbing his hands, as one in deep study. This I imputed to the sympathetic feelings of a tender heart, which increased my esteem for him, and as that increased I gave the most favourable interpretation to his silence. I construed it into delicacy of sentiment, as if he dreaded to wound my pride by expressing his commiseration in words, leaving his generous conduct to speak for itself.

"It now approached six o'clock in the evening, and as I had eaten no breakfast, and as my spirits were raised, my appetite for dinner grew uncommonly keen. At length the old woman came into the room, with two plates, one spoon, and a dirty cloth, which she laid upon the table. This appearance, without increasing my spirits, did not diminish my appetite. My protectress soon returned with a small bowl of sago, a small porringer of sour milk, a loaf of stale brown bread, and the heel of an old cheese all over crawling with mites. My friend apologised that his illness obliged him to live on slops, and that better fare was not in the house; observing at the same time that a milk diet was certainly the most healthful; and at eight o'clock he again recommended a regular life, declaring that for his part he would *lie down with the lamb and rise with the lark*. My hunger was at this time so exceedingly sharp that I wished for another slice of the loaf, but was obliged to go to bed without even that refreshment.

"The lenten entertainment I had received made me resolve to depart as soon as possible; accordingly next morning when I spoke of going, he did not oppose my resolution; he rather commended my design, adding some very sage counsel upon the occasion. 'To be sure,' said he, 'the longer you stay away from your mother, the more you will grieve her and your other friends; and possibly they are already afflicted at hearing of this foolish expedition you have made.' Notwithstanding all this, and without any hope of softening such a sordid heart, I again renewed the tale of my distress, and asking 'how he thought I could travel above a hundred miles upon one half-crown?' I begged to borrow a single guinea, which I assured him should be repaid with thanks. 'And you know, Sir,' said I, 'it is no more than I have often done for you.' To which he firmly answered, 'Why look you, Mr. Goldsmith, that is neither here nor there. I have paid you all you ever lent me, and this sickness of mine has left me bare of cash. But I have bethought myself of a conveyance for you; sell your horse and I will furnish you a much better one to ride on.' I readily grasped at his proposal, and begged to see the nag, on which he led me to his bedchamber, and from under the bed he pulled out

a stout oak stick. 'Here he is,' said he, 'take this in your hand, and it will carry you to your mother's with more safety than such a horse as you ride.' I was in doubt when I got it into my hand whether I should not, in the first place, apply it to his pate; but a rap at the street door made the wretch fly to it, and when I returned to the parlour, he introduced me, as if nothing of the kind had happened, to the gentleman who entered, as Mr. Goldsmith, his most ingenious and worthy friend, of whom he had so often heard him speak with rapture. I could scarcely compose myself; and must have betrayed indignation in my mien to the stranger, who was a counsellor at law in the neighbourhood, a man of engaging aspect and polite address.

"After spending an hour he asked my friend and me to dine with him at his house. This I declined at first, as I wished to have no further communication with my old hospitable friend; but at the solicitation of both I at last consented, determined as I was by two motives; one, that I was prejudiced in favour of the looks and manner of the counsellor; and the other, that I stood in need of a comfortable dinner. And there indeed I found every thing that I could wish, abundance without profusion, and elegance without affectation. In the evening when my old friend, who had eaten very plentifully at his neighbour's table, but talked again of lying down with the lamb, made a motion to me for retiring, our generous host requested I should take a bed with him, upon which I plainly told my old friend that he might go home and take care of the horse he had given me, but that I should never re-enter his doors. He went away with a laugh, leaving me to add this to the other little things the counsellor already knew of his plausible neighbour.

"And now, my dear mother, I found sufficient to reconcile me to all my follies; for here I spent three whole days. The counsellor had two sweet girls to his daughters, who played enchantingly on the harpsicord; and yet it was but a melancholy pleasure I felt the first time I heard them; for that being the first time also that either of them had touched the instrument since their mother's death, I saw the tears in silence trickle down their father's cheeks. I every day endeavoured to go away, but every day was pressed and obliged to stay. On my going, the counsellor offered me his purse, with a horse and servant to convey me home; but the latter I declined, and only took a guinea to bear my necessary expenses on the road.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"To Mrs. Anne Goldsmith, Ballymahon."

This curious story which however bears not a few traces of the manner and characteristic simplicity of the writer, appeared so strange to Malone as to induce him to consider it mere invention of Oliver in order to answer some whim of the moment, or divert curiosity from further inquiry into the real cause of his absence. His opinion is thus communicated to Dr. Percy, June 5th, 1802, soon after the publication of the memoir prefixed to the works.

"In the beginning of this letter I quite forgot to thank you for the

entertainment which Goldsmith's Life afforded me. I only lamented that there was not more of it. Surely I once read two or three more letters than we have in print. Have you any faith in the story that his sister tells of his giving a *dance* in college, when he had not a shilling in the world; and of his excursion to the county of Cork, where we have a long story furnished by this lady without a single *name* or *date*? For my part, I do not believe a word of either. They were mere inventions of the poet, to satisfy the whim of the moment. Why did he not name the Cork humourist, who offered him the wooden horse? Give me but time, place, and names, and the genuineness or falsehood of any story may be easily ascertained.*

From a very cautious inquirer like Malone, such suspicion was to be expected; yet it exhibits, perhaps, more of caution than consideration of all the circumstances, as in the allusion, for instance, to the dance; for though Goldsmith no doubt was usually poor, the arrival of a supply would probably to one of his disposition, prove the cause and the apology, for an act of extravagance. The story, if a fiction, could answer no obvious purpose; it does not attempt to extenuate the fault of quitting his friends in so abrupt a manner, to explain his motives for going abroad, or give satisfactory reasons for relinquishing his design; on the contrary, the whole is but an admission of continued thoughtlessness and imprudence. If considered merely in the light of an improbable tale, the critic did not remember how much Goldsmith's career exhibits scenes still more strange and eventful, and peculiarities of character quite as strongly marked; some already known, and others now for the first time, perhaps, to be disclosed. That he proceeded to Cork and returned penniless, there seems no reason to doubt; nor could this be deemed strange in one who being then provided with a horse and money, should afterwards set out and travel over the continent of Europe on foot destitute of either. It is possible that the inhospitality of his acquaintance may be exaggerated. The incident of the staff, whether literally true or not, is introduced on another occasion:—"You are, my boy," said the Vicar of Wakefield to his son, "going to London on foot in the manner Hooker, your great ancestor, travelled there before you. Take from me the same horse that was given him by the good Bishop Jewel, *this staff*, and take this book too; (the Bible) it will be your comfort on the way."

The question of names and dates is thus fairly disposed of by Bishop Percy in reply, July 13th, 1802. Had Ireland chanced to be the scene of Malone's critical researches, his progress would have been impeded every moment, by the want, even in important things, of what he here seems to think essential in a comparatively trifling matter:—

"Upon reconsidering your last obliging letter of June 5th, I cannot concur in thinking that Mrs. Hodson's long story of Goldsmith's

* From MS. correspondence in the possession of W. R. Mason, Esq. of the Temple.

juvenile rambles is improbable because it is devoid of names and dates. It was at least forty years after the events that she wrote the account from memory; and it would have been very incredible that she should have given dates concerning which she probably did not inquire at the time, or names of persons whom it is likely she never knew.”*

It being at length necessary to choose a profession, the law was determined upon; and with this view Mr. Contarine supplied Goldsmith with fifty pounds, according to the account of Mrs. Hodson, and sent him off to the Irish metropolis on his way to London, in order to keep the usual terms common to Irish students. In Dublin, however, the same authority informs us, his evil genius again prevailed; for being tempted into a gaming-house, according to traditionary accounts by a Roscommon acquaintance, no inconsiderable adept in the art, he was stripped of all his money, and again left to become a burthen and a subject of reproach to his friends.

The shame and mortification occasioned by his imprudence were very sincere; for, however prone to fall into error, few felt more acutely, or lamented more strongly, when too late, its usual results. He continued some time in Dublin without having courage to communicate his loss. This, however, being at length made known, he was again invited to the country and forgiven by his uncle, but less readily by his mother; who experienced no ordinary vexation and evinced some resentment, at such repeated imprudences and miscarriages. He lived for a few months afterwards with his brother Henry; until a quarrel arising from some trifling cause, proceeded to undue extremities,† and for a time terminated all regard and intercourse between the brothers. We know it was not permanent; none were more aware of their own faults than Oliver, or more grateful for the kindness and exertions of his relatives for his interests, although continually subject to that weakness which, however conscious of doing wrong, seems unable to perform what is right. This momentary anger, though carried farther on the part of both than propriety warranted, gradually subsided, and we have seen with what respect and tenderness he addresses him in the dedication to and introductory lines of the “Traveller.” Another profession was chosen, not only with the concurrence of his immediate relatives, but the advice, as was asserted by the poet himself, of Dean Goldsmith of Cloyne; the design now being to proceed to Edinburgh and commence the study of physic.

During the two years he passed in the country, not unfavourable even in the want of fixed occupation for the exercise of a talent for poetry, he is said to have amused Miss Contarine and her father with occasional specimens of his verses, chiefly songs and light pieces; and to have drawn up, in compliance with the wish of his uncle, for some purpose not now remembered, remarks on the more popular

* MS. correspondence furnished by Dr. H. U. Thomson.

† Communicated to the Rev. Mr. Handcock, by Mrs. Hodson; who, however, was loth that all the circumstances attending what was at first considered a serious quarrel between them should transpire publicly.

poets, their comparative merits and defects. None of these were preserved by that lady; but when questioned many years afterwards, as Mrs. Lawder,* by Mr. Daly, she said she understood they had been subsequently published in London, and when shown the Lady's Magazine, believed she recollected a few. Age and illness, however, rendered this evidence less precise and satisfactory than might be wished, though not wholly without value. Two of the songs, if inferior in poetical merit, resemble those among his acknowledged pieces which express simply a sentiment, and without vouching for their authenticity, are transcribed for the information of the reader. The prose piece alluded to is still more doubtful; in an enlarged and altered state, it is supposed to be the same printed in the Literary Magazine after Dr. Johnson had ceased to write in that Journal, and of which some notice will hereafter be taken.

THE STORY OF PROMETHEUS APPLIED.

UPON STEALING A KISS FROM A LADY ASLEEP.

This ! This is life ! All else a dream !
 This is the true Promethean flame :
 From heav'n by daring theft convey'd,
 Though by the prize the risk's o'erpaid.
 But if to steal those heav'nly fires
 An equal punishment requires,
 While recent from the theft I glow,
 Oh ! fix me on that breast of snow.
 Well pleased to languish life away,
 Love shall upon my vitals prey ;
 Nor will I wish whilst there I'm laid,
 Alcides near to give me aid.

SONG.

I.

Life's a garden rich in treasure,
 Bury'd like the seeds in earth ;
 There lies joy, contentment, pleasure,
 But 'tis love must give them birth.

II.

For that sun its aid denying,
 We no happiness can taste ;
 But in cold obstruction lying,
 Life is all one barren waste.

* The husband of this lady, long after the death of the Poet, was barbarously murdered; she herself, narrowly escaping the same fate, died in Dublin, about 1790.

He had bought an iron chest for the greater security of his papers and money, which occasioned the belief among his servants and labourers of its containing great treasures; they conspired in consequence to murder the family, rob the house, and burn it, in order to conceal all traces of their atrocities. Mr. Lawder was shot with his own blunderbuss, and his wife it was likewise supposed had been despatched; they carried off the plate, besides about 300*l*. in money, but failed in setting fire to the house. No less than six of the wretches concerned in this crime were detected and executed.

Another.

I.

How happy is the humble cell,
 How blest the deep retreat,
 Where careful billows never swell,
 Nor passion's tempests beat.

II.

But safely through the seas of life,
 Calm reason wafts us o'er ;
 Free from ambition, care, and strife,
 To death's all silent shore.

TO A YOUNG LADY ON VALENTINE'S DAY,

WITH THE DRAWING OF A HEART.

With submission at your shrine,
 Comes a heart your Valentine ;
 From the side where once it grew,
 See it panting flies to you.
 Take it, fair one, to your breast,
 Sooth the fluttering thing to rest ;
 Let the gentle, spotless toy,
 Be your sweetest, greatest joy ;
 Every night when wrapp'd in sleep,
 Next your heart the conquest keep ;
 Or if dreams your fancy move,
 Hear it whisper me and love ;
 Then in pity to the swain,
 Who must heartless else remain,
 Soft as gentle dewy show'rs,
 Slow descend on April flow'rs ;
 Soft as gentle riv'lets glide,
 Steal unnoticed to my side ;
 If the gem you have to spare,
 Take your own and place it there.

By the united contributions of his uncle, brother, and sister (Mrs. Hodson,) and their promise of continued support, as she stated to Mr. Handcock, he reached Edinburgh in the autumn of 1752, toward the commencement of the medical season. The change no doubt possessed much interest for one who, by the fruits of his observations, seems to have examined mankind with higher views than merely idle curiosity, and who contemplated the study on which he was about to enter with the more favour, as it promised increased opportunities of gratifying this favourite propensity by enabling him to turn knowledge to use in whatever region he thought proper.

The professions of divinity and law exclusively confine the individual who follows either to one people and one country ; that of medicine has a more extended sphere of action, and belongs alike to all countries. The physician is, or may be, literally a citizen of the world ; for there is no creed, or code, or locality, to which he is of necessity confined ; his calling is of universal application, and seems equally in request in all communities of men, whether civilised or

savage. But with this advantage, it is not the fitting pursuit of an ambitious or worldly man; for though by its exercise subsistence may be procured in almost any place, yet in none, with a few exceptions, is it the road to wealth, and never, with us at least, to the highest honours; it founds no great families, ensures no great estates, and receives no peerages. The trader, the manufacturer, the lawyer, and the divine, however humble their pretensions to merit, may by favour or by circumstances acquire the highest rank their country can bestow; but from the possessor of a degree of skill which may benefit the whole human race, and to which society is hourly and largely indebted, often for the unpaid and always for the unostentatious alleviation of an infinite portion of human misery, such honours are in England, at least in practise, withheld.

An instance of the habitual thoughtlessness belonging to Goldsmith's character, occurred at the moment of first setting foot in the northern metropolis. Having procured a lodging and deposited his luggage, he eagerly sallied forth to gratify curiosity by viewing the city, in which having occupied the whole of the day, the approach of night reminded him that he had neither inquired the name of his landlady, nor the street in which she lived: in this dilemma, having wandered about in a search which might have been useless, an accidental meeting with the cawdy, or porter, whom he had employed in the morning in removing to his new abode, obviated a difficulty that might have occasioned inconvenience.

In this house, which from the state of his finances may be presumed not to have been of the first description, he also agreed to board; and the economy of the table afterwards afforded a subject of ludicrous merriment when disposed to unbend in the more social circles of London by relating anecdotes of his early life. A leg of mutton, as he told the story, dished up in various ways by the ingenuity of his hostess, served for the better part of dinner during a week, a dish of broth being made on the seventh day from the bones; to which there seems an allusion in one of his works.—“We seem to be pretty much in the situation of travellers at a Scotch inn: vile entertainment is served up, complained of, and set down; up comes worse, and that also is changed; and every change makes our wretched cheer more unsavoury.” But having no relish for this system of management, he soon joined several fellow students, his acquaintance and countrymen, who were better accommodated in another quarter of the town.

His studies were commenced under the usual professors, among whom the elder Monro was more than once mentioned by him with respect, who then filled the chair devoted to medical science with a degree of reputation that drew many students to Edinburgh. Goldsmith probably felt the want of previous initiation into the elementary and practical parts of the art; for medicine, unlike the pure sciences, is not to be wholly learnt from professors, or in colleges; it has been said that he attended a course of anatomy in Dublin, but as his family made no allusion to this, it is probably incorrect. Willing however to commence with spirit, and avail himself of every source

of professional information or discussion, he became, not long after his arrival, a member of the Medical Society in that city, a voluntary association of the students which still continues to flourish with increased reputation. On reference to the books, his admission into it bears date January 13th, 1753, and it would seem, without having fulfilled the usual present condition required from a new member, that of reading a paper on a medical subject, which it may be very well conceived he could not, from his recent initiation into the profession, draw up himself.

The record of students in the University at this period being, as represented by the authorities, not now in existence, his name or course of studies cannot be more accurately traced. Chemistry is known to have been one of his favourite pursuits; and it is believed, from the mention of his name on more than one occasion by the late celebrated Dr. Joseph Black, who graduated in Edinburgh in 1754, and became known as the discoverer of latent heat and other enlargements of chemical science, that he was at this period one of his acquaintance.

From anecdotes remembered by fellow students who afterwards settled in London, and who told them when their subject had risen into celebrity, he appears to have been known more for his convivial qualities than the ardour of his studies; he sang Irish songs, and told stories with considerable humour. It appears, likewise, that his facility of temper in obliging others, and a large portion of that exuberance of animal spirits common to youth, drew him into occasional pecuniary difficulties ill suited to scanty supplies; these were rendered less regular, as his sister stated, by his own negligence in not writing with the requisite exactness promised on his departure, or giving such statements as were expected of his occupations and progress. He seemed to take a lead in convivial meetings of the students; and for the purpose, as he imagined, of preserving the fancied honour of this position, felt or assumed a careless air on money matters, of which he himself related an instance to a party of friends at the Grecian Coffee House, when a similar frolic or bravado on the part of a young Templar became the subject of conversation. A new piece being announced for performance in the Edinburgh theatre, the intention of witnessing it was mentioned by some students with whom he passed the evening, when a proposal came in an off-hand manner from Goldsmith, as if the amount was of little moment to his purse, to draw lots with any one of the number, which of the two should treat the whole party to the play. "To my great though secret joy," he said, "they all declined the challenge. Had it been accepted, and had I proved to be the loser, part of my wardrobe must have been pledged in order to raise the money."

While here, he was known to display poetical powers, but in what way exerted, excepting in songs for the amusement of his companions, no distinct account is preserved; few have an interest in remembering such things beyond the moment, and a general impression of the fact is all that can be communicated to the biographer, after the

lapse of a few years. Whatever their nature, they no doubt found their way into the periodical works with which he was subsequently connected in London. An Epigram, not the best of its kind, inserted in his works, bears the date of Edinburgh, 1753; and of letters the numbers written thence, were inconsiderable. One of the few dated from this city after being resident in it about a year, was addressed to his friend Bryanton, and seems in the nature of a general acquittance of his debt of correspondence. It exhibits, contrary to an opinion expressed by some persons at the time of his death of his original style of writing being stiff, all his characteristic ease, humour, and vivacity. A copy, purchased in a sale of miscellaneous effects at Ballymahon, found its way into the *Anthologia Hibernica*, in 1793, from which imperfect transcripts have been made into more than one publication. The original, written on a folio sheet has been submitted to the present writer by the Rev. Dr. Handcock, of Dublin, son-in-law of the gentleman to whom it was addressed, and in whose possession it remains.

All of which it may be supposed he knew of Scotland at this time, he tells; the design is obviously, as indeed he in some measure intimates, to amuse his friend, and therefore we allow for a little comic exaggeration in his descriptions; but the admitted weaknesses of our northern countrymen, their extreme nationality, and rather too ardent admiration of themselves, could not escape so keen an observer of character. It is amusing to consider how this letter, while it touches on this foible, furnishes in its fate an exemplification of the fact; for notwithstanding its excellence, and the scarcity of the Poet's epistolary communications, which are fewer in number than those of any other of our eminent writers, it has been omitted in the usual biographical notices prefixed to most of the Scottish editions of his works, for no other reason, as it appears, than containing a few harmless jests upon Scotland.

"To Robert Bryanton, at Balymahon, Ireland.

"Edinburgh, September 26th, 1753.

"MY DEAR BOB,

"How many good excuses (and you know I was ever good at an excuse) might I call up to vindicate my past shameful silence. I might tell how I wrote a long letter on my first coming hither, and seem vastly angry at my not receiving an answer; I might allege that business (with business you know I was always pestered) had never given me time to finger a pen. But I suppress those and twenty more as plausible, and as easily invented, since they might be attended with a slight inconvenience of being known to be lies. Let me then speak truth. An hereditary indolence (I have it from the mother's side) has hitherto prevented my writing to you, and still prevents my writing at least twenty-five letters more, due to my friends in Ireland. No turn-spit-dog gets up into his wheel with

more reluctance than I sit down to write; yet no dog ever loved the roast meat he turns better than I do him I now address.

"Yet what shall I say now I am entered? Shall I tire you with a description of this unfruitful country; where I must lead you over their hills all brown with heath, or their valleys scarcely able to feed a rabbit? Man alone seems to be the only creature who has arrived to the natural size in this poor soil. Every part of the country presents the same dismal landscape. No grove,* nor brook, lend their music to cheer the stranger, or make the inhabitants forget their poverty. Yet with all these disadvantages to call him down to humility, a Scotchman is one of the proudest things alive. The poor have pride ever ready to relieve them. If mankind should happen to despise them, they are masters of their own admiration; and that they can plentifully bestow upon themselves.

"From their pride and poverty, as I take it, results one advantage this country enjoys; namely, the gentlemen here are much better bred than among us. No such character here as our fox-hunters; and they have expressed great surprise when I informed them, that some men in Ireland of one thousand pounds a year, spend their whole lives in running after a hare, drinking to be drunk, and getting every girl with child that will let them. Truly if such a being, equipped in his hunting dress, came among a circle of Scotch gentry, they would behold him with the same astonishment that a countryman does King George on horseback.

"The men here have generally high cheek bones, and are lean and swarthy, fond of action, dancing in particular. Now that I have mentioned dancing, let me say something of their balls, which are very frequent here. When a stranger enters the dancing-hall, he sees one end of the room taken up by the ladies, who sit dismally in a group by themselves;—in the other end stand their pensive partners that are to be;—but no more intercourse between the sexes than there is between two countries at war. The ladies indeed may ogle, and the gentlemen sigh; but an embargo is laid on any closer commerce. At length, to interrupt hostilities, the lady directress, or intendant, or what you will, pitches upon a lady and gentleman to walk a minuet; which they perform with a formality that approaches to despondence. After five or six couple have thus walked the gauntlet, all stand up to country dances; each gentleman furnished with a partner from the aforesaid lady directress; so they dance much, say nothing, and thus concludes our assembly. I told a Scotch gentleman that such profound silence resembled the ancient procession of the Roman matrons in honour of Ceres; and the Scotch gentleman told me, (and, faith, I believe he was right) that I was a very great pedant for my pains.

"Now I am come to the ladies; and to show that I love Scotland, and every thing that belongs to so charming a country, I insist on

* Goldsmith has here anticipated his friend Johnson, in the well known censure of Scotland for want of trees.

it, and will give him leave to break my head that denies it—that the Scotch ladies are ten thousand times finer and handsomer than the Irish. To be sure, now, I see your sisters Betty and Peggy vastly surprised at my partiality,—but tell them flatly, I don't value them—or their fine skins, or eyes, or good sense, or —, a potato;—for I say, and will maintain it; and as a convincing proof (I am in a great passion) of what I assert, the Scotch ladies say it themselves. But to be less serious; where will you find a language so prettily become a pretty mouth as the broad Scotch? And the women here speak it in its highest purity; for instance, teach one of your young ladies at home to pronounce the “Whoar wull I gong?” with a becoming widening of mouth, and I'll lay my life they'll wound every hearer.

“We have no such character here as a coquet, but alas! how many envious prudes! Some days ago I walked into my Lord Kilcoubry's (don't be surprised, my lord is but a glover,)* when the Duchess of Hamilton (that fair who sacrificed her beauty to her ambition, and her inward peace to a title and gilt equipage) passed by in her chariot;† her battered husband, or more properly the guardian of her charms, sat by her side. Straight envy began, in the shape of no less than three ladies who sat with me, to find faults in her faultless form.—‘For my part,’ says the first, ‘I think what I always thought, that the Duchess has too much of the red in her complexion.’ ‘Madam, I am of your opinion,’ says the second; ‘I think her face has a palish cast too much on the delicate order.’

* William Maclellan, who claimed the title, and whose son succeeded in establishing the claim in 1773. The father is said to have voted at the election of the sixteen Peers for Scotland; and to have sold gloves in the lobby at this and other public assemblages.

† Her Grace was one of the beautiful and celebrated Miss Gunnings. Her marriage with James, fourth Duke of Hamilton, which took place about eighteen months before, excited much attention in the fashionable world, and is thus amusingly, though perhaps not very correctly, told in one of the letters of Horace Walpole, February 1752. “The event that has made most noise since my last, is the extempore wedding of the youngest of the two Gunnings, who have made so vehement a noise. Lord Coventry, a grave young lord, of the remains of the patriot breed, has long dangled after the eldest, virtuously with regard to her virtue, not very honourably with regard to his own credit. About six weeks ago, Duke Hamilton, the very reverse of the Earl, hot, debauched, extravagant, and equally damaged in his fortune and person, fell in love with the youngest at the masquerade, and determined to marry her in the spring. About a fortnight since, at an immense assembly at my Lord Chesterfield's, made to show the house, which is really most magnificent, Duke Hamilton made violent love at one end of the room, while he was playing at faro at the other end; that is, he saw neither the bank nor his own cards, which were of three hundred pounds each; he soon lost a thousand. I own I was so little a professor in love, that I thought all this parade looked ill for the poor girl; and could not conceive, if he was so much engaged with his mistress as to disregard such sums, why he played at all. However, two nights afterwards, being left alone with her while her mother and sister were at Bedford House, he found himself so impatient, that he sent for a parson. The doctor refused to perform the ceremony without licence or ring: the Duke swore he would send for the Archbishop;—at last they were married with a ring of the bed-curtain, at half an hour after twelve at night, at Mayfair chapel. The Scotch are enraged; the women mad that so much beauty has had its effect; and what is most silly, my Lord Coventry declares that now he will marry the other.”

‘And, let me tell you,’ added the third lady, whose mouth was puckered up to the size of an issue, ‘that the Duchess has fine lips, but she wants a mouth.’—At this every lady drew up her mouth as if going to pronounce the letter P.

“But how ill, my Bob, does it become me to ridicule women with whom I have scarcely any correspondence? There are, ’tis certain, handsome women here; and ’tis certain they have handsome men to keep them company. An ugly and poor man is society only for himself; and such society the world lets me enjoy in great abundance. Fortune has given you circumstances and nature a person to look charming in the eyes of the fair. Nor do I envy my dear Bob such blessings, while I may sit down and laugh at the world and at myself—the most ridiculous object in it. But you see I am grown downright splenetic, and perhaps the fit may continue till I receive an answer to this. I know you cannot send me much news from Ballymahon, but such as it is, send it all; every thing you send will be agreeable to me.

“Has George Conway put up a sign yet; or John Binley left off drinking drams; or Tom Allen got a new wig? But I leave you to your own choice what to write. While I live, know you have a true friend in yours, &c. &c. &c.

“OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

“P. S. Give my sincere respects (not compliments, do you mind) to your agreeable family, and give my service to my mother if you see her; for, as you express it in Ireland, I have a sneaking kindness for her still. Direct to me,——, Student in Physic, in Edinburgh.”

Since the preceding pages were printed off, two additional letters of the Poet, written to his uncle Contarine from Scotland, which had been long though vainly sought in various quarters, have at length come to hand. The first, which is anterior in date to the preceding, describes the professors under whom he studied; states the pleasure he takes in the sciences; and adverts to a month’s tour accomplished or rather as it would seem in progress, in the Highlands, reserving the description of it, he says, for a succeeding letter. No trace of this communication, which we may believe from his humour and skill in narration to have been of an amusing character, has been found.

“*To the Rev. Thos. Contarine.*

May 8, 1753.

“MY DEAR UNCLE,

“In your letter (the only one I received from Kilmore,) you call me the philosopher who carries all his goods about him. Yet how can such a character fit me, who have left behind in Ireland every thing worth possessing; friends that I loved, and a society that pleased while it instructed? Who but must regret the loss of such enjoyments? Who but must regret his absence from Kilmore, that ever knew it as I did? Here, as recluse as the Turkish Spy at Paris I am almost unknown to every body, except some few who attend the professors of physic as I do.

"Apropos, I shall give you the professors' names, and, as far as occurs to me, their characters; and first, as most deserving, Mr. Munro, Professor of Anatomy: this man has brought the science he teaches to as much perfection as it is capable of; and not content with barely teaching anatomy, he launches out into all the different branches of physic, when all his remarks are new and useful. 'Tis he, I may venture to say, that draws hither such a number of students from all parts of the world, even from Russia. He is not only a skilful physician, but an able orator, and delivers things in their nature obscure in so easy a manner, that the most unlearned may understand him. Plume, Professor of Chemistry, understands his business well, but delivers himself so ill, that he is but little regarded. Alston, Professor of Materia Medica, speaks much, but little to the purpose. The Professors of Theory and Practice (of physic) say nothing but what we may find in books laid before us, and speak that in so drowsy and heavy a manner, that their hearers are not many degrees in a better state than their patients.

"You see, then, dear, that Munro is the only great man among them; so that I intend to hear him another winter, and go then to hear Albinus, the great Professor at Leyden. I read (with satisfaction) a science the most pleasing in nature, so that my labours are but a relaxation, and, I may truly say, the only thing here that gives me pleasure. How I enjoy the pleasing hope of returning with skill, and to find my friends stand in no need of my assistance! How many happy years do I wish you! and nothing but want of health can take from your happiness, since you so well pursue the paths that conduct to virtue."

"I am, my dear Uncle, your most obliged,

"Most affectionate nephew,

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"P. S.—I draw this time for 6*l.*, and will draw next October but for 4*l.*, as I was obliged to buy every thing since I came to Scotland, shirts not even excepted. I am a little more early the first year than I shall be for the future, for I absolutely will not trouble you before the time hereafter.

"My best love attend Mr. and Mrs. Lawder, and Heaven preserve them! I am again your dutiful nephew, O. G.

"I have been a month in the Highlands. I set out the first day on foot, but an ill-natured corn I have got on my toe has for the future prevented that cheap method of travelling; so the second day I hired a horse, about the size of a ram, and he walked away (trot he could not) as pensive as his master. In three days we reached the Highlands. This letter would be too long if it contained the description I intend giving of that country, so shall make it the subject of my next."

Having now resided about eighteen months in Edinburgh, and the sanction of his uncle obtained to fulfil the long meditated design of visiting the Continent on the plea of professional improve-

ment, he prepared for his departure. Montpellier, which had then some reputation for physic, as well as Paris, are said to have been his original destination. But shortly before setting out, an interruption, one of the effects of good nature unable to resist importunity or what he considered the claims of friendship, retarded the design.

A fellow student named Kennedy, under the plea of great distress and a pledge of the speedy arrival of his own remittances, persuaded him to become answerable for a portion of his debts, which however failed to be discharged at the specified time promised by the debtor. Goldsmith was in consequence called upon for payment, but unable to raise the amount, was in turn obliged to have recourse to the assistance of two fellow students to escape a dilemma that threatened his personal liberty. These were men of considerable attainments, and not undistinguished in their respective spheres in life. One was Dr. Joseph Fenn Sleigh, an amiable and intelligent Quaker, the schoolfellow of Burke at Ballitore, the first friend of Barry the painter, and who died prematurely in 1771, an eminent physician in Cork. The other was Mr. Lauchlan Maclean, a former associate in Trinity College, whose career seems to have embraced many changes of scene, and who afterwards by the public situations he held, the pamphlets he wrote, a challenge sent to Wilkes and not accepted, and the party with which he was connected, drew considerable notice in the political circles of London between the years 1765 and 1776.

The son of a gentleman of small fortune in the north of Ireland, and born about the year 1728, he was transferred at the age of eighteen from a school near Belfast, to Trinity College, Dublin.* Here he became known to Burke and Goldsmith, and proceeding to Edinburgh to study physic, his name appears in the list of the Medical Society, January 4th, 1754, a year after that of Goldsmith, by whom he was introduced. He afterwards visited America—whether at first as a private practitioner, or medical officer in the army, does not appear; probably, as was then not unusual, officiating in both capacities. While in this country he acquired great medical reputation; followed by its common attendant envy from the less fortunate of his brethren; and an anecdote is told of him at this time which Almon quotes in one of his publications, as an instance of what he terms “true magnanimity.” A rival practitioner extremely jealous of his success and who had adopted every means, not excepting the most unfair, of injuring his credit, was at length afflicted by the dangerous illness of an only son; and as possessing the first character for professional skill, Mr. Maclean was solicited to attend. His zeal proved unremitting; he sat up with the patient many nights, and chiefly by his sagacity and indefatigable efforts succeeded beyond expectation in restoring the

* “1745 (1746) *Maii* 29° *Lauchlan McLeane Pens* :—*Filius Johanni generosi*—*Annum agnes* 18—*Natus in Comitatu Antrim*.—*Educatus sub ferula M^{ro} Dennison*—*Tutor Mr Read*.” College Register.

young man to health ; refusing all consideration for his labours, and saying to his friends, " Now am I amply revenged."

In 1761, while surgeon of Otway's regiment, quartered in Philadelphia, a quarrel took place with the Governor, against whom Macleane, who was a man of superior talents, wrote a paper distinguished for ability and severity, which drew general attention. Colonel Barré,* subsequently so well known in political life, then serving there with his regiment and who was probably involved in the quarrel, is said to have formed a regard for him in consequence of the part he took ; but it is more likely that a previous acquaintance existed, as the Colonel had been likewise a member of Trinity College. Under the patronage of this officer he came to England, renewed his acquaintance with Burke, and procured an office under government. While travelling on the Continent in 1766, he proved useful to Barry, then on his way to Italy, who became known to him through the introduction of his first patrons, Burke and Dr. Sleigh. Soon afterwards he became successively private secretary to Lord Shelburne, and Under Secretary of State for the Southern Department, retiring from office with his patron on the dissolution of the ministry drawn together by the Duke of Grafton. In May, 1771, Lord North gave him the situation of superintendent of lazarettoes, with, as the newspapers of the day state, " a salary of £1000 a year, and two pounds per diem travelling expenses." In January following, he received the collectorship of Philadelphia: this was soon exchanged for an appointment in India, where he afterwards became a kind of agent to Mr. Hastings. In that capacity he brought home the Governor General's conditional resignation of office ; yet the latter, with that singularity which often influenced his proceedings in the government of India, took a speedy opportunity of disavowing both his agent and his act, although communicated to the Court of Directors in his own handwriting. In proceeding again to India, intending it is said to take strong measures for an explanation of behaviour that seemed to throw censure upon his honesty or honour, the ship in which he embarked foundered, and all on board perished, with papers seriously criminatory, according to report, of the administration of Mr. Hastings.

Mr. Macleane enjoyed the credit of being quick, clear-headed, and well informed ; and by some was considered as possessing " wonderful powers:" an impediment in speech precluded him from being useful in Parliament, or shining in conversation. He is one of the many persons supposed to have written the letters of Junius ; but this conjecture is untenable from the fact that his patron, Lord Shelburne, had been virulently attacked by that writer under another

* No memoir of this gentleman, who afterwards occupied so large a share of public attention during the American war by his speeches in Parliament, by the high offices he occasionally held under government, and as being the personal friend of Lord Shelburne, is said to exist. The following entry from the Register of Dublin University may assist the future inquirer:—" 1740, *Novembris* 19^o.—*Isaac Barre Pens.—Filius Petri mercator—Annum agens 14—Natus Dublinii—Educatus sub Dno Loyd.—Tutor Dr Pelissier.*"

signature in 1767,* when Maclean was his Under Secretary. And having published a pamphlet or two on the affairs of Falkland's Islands, in defence of the ministry which had dismissed him from office, was himself ridiculed by Junius, writing under the signature of Vindex,† in March, 1771. From these and other circumstances, the question of the authorship of these letters cannot therefore be decided by any claims put forward for Mr. Maclean. His private character for benevolence and several good qualities stood high in the opinion of the Burkes, and is expressed without reserve in correspondence with Barry.

Another fellow student with whom Goldsmith preserved an intimacy in future life, was Mr. (afterwards Dr.) William Farr, a Fellow of the Royal Society, who having entered into the medical service of the navy about 1760, for a long term of years filled the office of physician to the great Naval Hospitals of Haslar and Plymouth. He had been educated under the eminent Dr. Doddridge of Northampton, had spent two years at Aberdeen previous to coming to Edinburgh, possessed literary tastes, and by his manners and attainments found ready admission into many of the literary circles of London, to which Goldsmith sometimes formed the channel of introduction. From him part of the little which is known of the latter while in the Scottish metropolis is derived; and more would have been gleaned of their subsequent intercourse in London, but for the habit of writing his daily remarks in a short hand which could not be deciphered. A few autograph memorials of the Poet remain in his family, one of which is the original copy of the dialogue-epilogue meant to be spoken by Mrs. Bulkley and Miss Catley, presented by himself to Dr. Farr, and since printed in his works.‡

The second recently discovered letter, without date, though written in January 1754, or the end of the previous December, states his intention to go to Paris in the spring, and to Leyden the following winter. By this also it would seem a new incident in his life is dis-

* Vide Woodfall's Junius, ed. 1812; vol. ii. p. 470.

† Ibid. vol. iii. p. 343.

‡ From the information of Mr. William Farr Rose, of the Navy Pay Office, his grandson, and son of Mr. Rose, the friend of Cowper. One of the incidents in their meetings in Edinburgh, in which Goldsmith bore a part, though not a conspicuous one, was thus told by Dr. Farr. The question was started in an evening association of students, whether it was probable the spirits of deceased friends were permitted to revisit their former haunts, and some ingenuity it was thought was exhibited in the arguments for and against it brought forward during the discussion. One of the disputants sailed, with the knowledge of all the party, for London the following morning; but on the ensuing day, unknown to them, the vessel was obliged to put back. Meeting with a companion of the previous night on re-entering the city, he was requested to keep out of sight till the evening, when the argument was to be resumed; accordingly, on re-assembling, one of the most sturdy opponents of the question, who professed utter incredulity as to apparitions, second sight, and other popular superstitions of Scotland, was asked whether his unbelief would give way to demonstration; and after some preliminary manœuvres calculated to excite awe and anxiety, the friend who was supposed to be on his way to London suddenly appeared. The effect upon the object of this boyish experiment was said to have been fainting at first, and afterwards deprivation of reason.

closed, that of having been an inmate of the Duke of Hamilton; on what occasion, in what capacity, or by whose introduction does not appear; but it is evident he did not like his position in the family. In the letter to Bryanton from Edinburgh, it will be remembered, he alludes to the Duchess, with whom, it is possible, some acquaintance may have been afterwards formed through her Irish connexions.

“To the Rev. Thomas Contarine,

“MY DEAR UNCLE,

“After having spent two winters in Edinburgh, I now prepare to go to France the 10th of next February. I have seen all that this country can exhibit in the medical way, and therefore intend to visit Paris, where the great Mr. Farhein, Petit, and Du Hammel de Monceau instruct their pupils in all the branches of medicine. They speak French,* and consequently I shall have much the advantage of most of my countrymen, as I am perfectly acquainted with that language, and few who leave Ireland are so.

“Since I am upon so pleasing a topic as self applause, give me leave to say that the circle of science which I have run through, before I undertook the study of physick, is not only useful, but absolutely necessary to the making a skilful physician. Such sciences enlarge our understanding, and sharpen our sagacity; and what is a practitioner without both but an empiric, for never yet was a disorder found entirely the same in two patients. A quack, unable to distinguish the particularities in each disease, prescribes at a venture: if he finds such a disorder may be called by the general name of fever for instance, he has a set of remedies which he applies to cure it, nor does he desist till his medicines are run out, or his patient has lost his life. But the skilful physician distinguishes the symptoms, manures the sterility of nature, or prunes her luxuriance; nor does he depend so much on the efficacy of medicines as on their proper application. I shall spend this spring and summer in Paris, and the beginning of next winter go to Leyden. The great Albinus is still alive there, and ’twill be proper to go, though only to have it said that we have studied in so famous a university.

“As I shall not have another opportunity of receiving money from your bounty till my return to Ireland, so I have drawn for the last sum that I hope I shall ever trouble you for; ’tis 20*l*. And now, dear Sir, let me here acknowledge the humility of the station in which you found me; let me tell how I was despised by most, and hateful to myself. Poverty, hopeless poverty, was my lot, and Melancholy was beginning to make me her own. When you—but I stop here, to inquire how your health goes on? How does my cousin Jenny, and has she recovered her late complaint? How does my poor Jack Goldsmith? I fear his disorder is of such a nature as he won’t easily recover. I wish, my dear Sir, you would make me happy by another letter before I go abroad, for there I shall

* He means no doubt in contradistinction to other Continental medical schools, where they may have lectured in Latin.

hardly hear from you. I shall carry just 33*l.* to France, with good store of clothes, shirts, &c. &c., and that with economy will serve.

"I have spent more than a fortnight every second day at the Duke of Hamilton's, but it seems they like me more as a *jester* than as a companion; so I disdained so servile an employment; 'twas unworthy my calling as a physician.*

"I have nothing new to add from this country; and I beg, dear Sir, you will excuse this letter, so filled with egotism. I wish you may be revenged on me, by sending an answer filled with nothing but an account of yourself.

"I am, dear Uncle,

"Your most devoted

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"Give my——how shall I express it? Give my earnest love to Mr. and Mrs. Lawder."

CHAPTER V.

Quits Edinburgh.—Letter from Leyden.—Anecdotes.—Journey on the Continent.

To have gained the regard of men of sense and character, who had abundant opportunities in the familiar intercourse of students, of judging justly of his heart and understanding, is proof that his general conduct was free from reproach. Neither is there any doubt that they had formed a high estimate of his learning and talents. By their assistance he was saved from arrest; and quitting Edinburgh, though probably not with all the wealth (33*l.*) he had calculated upon, is said to have passed a short time in the north of England for the gratification of his curiosity; where we shall see that the first object of interest in his eyes was the beauty of the "farmers' daughters."

At Sunderland he was said by his Edinburgh acquaintance to have been arrested by one Barclay, a tailor; and at Newcastle, according to others, the same misfortune occurred to him again.† Strange as it may seem, these stories originated with the Poet himself, in order to conceal the fact of imprisonment upon another, though unfounded charge, the mere name of which he believed might

* Notice has been taken in a preceding page of his allusions to the situation of dependant to a great man, as if something of that kind lingered in his recollection.

† By an obliging communication from the Rev. Dr. Bliss of Oxford, the writer is informed that the venerable president of Magdalen College, in relation to this subject, states, that his tutor at Queen's, a Mr. M——, a north countryman, who had known Goldsmith, told a story of his getting into debt to a tailor in Newcastle, and of either being arrested, or going off without payment. All these accounts, no doubt, originated with the Poet himself, for the reason assigned to his uncle.

cause his degree to be withheld. This charge, and the story at length, is told in the following letter to his uncle, written from Leyden, which he desired to visit as a favourite school of physic, though accident carried him thither sooner than originally intended. The escape from perishing by shipwreck which it describes, is another of those singular occurrences that throw an air of romance over parts of his history, that nevertheless there are not the slightest reasons to disbelieve.

“ To the Rev. Thomas Contarine.

Leyden (the date wanting, but no doubt April or May, 1754.)

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I suppose by this time I am accused of either neglect or ingratitude, and my silence imputed to my usual slowness of writing. But believe me, Sir, when I say, that till now I had not the opportunity of sitting down with that ease of mind which writing required. You may see by the top of the letter that I am at Leyden; but of my journey hither you must be informed.

“ Sometime before the receipt of your last I embarked for Bourdeaux, on board a Scotch ship called the St. Andrew’s, Captain John Wall master. The ship made a tolerable appearance; and as another inducement, I was let to know that six agreeable passengers were to be my company. Well, we were but two days at sea, when a storm drove us into a city of England called Newcastle-upon-Tyne. We all went on shore to refresh us after the fatigues of our voyage. Seven men and I were one day on shore; and on the following evening, as we were all very merry, the room door bursts open; enters a sergeant, and twelve grenadiers with their bayonets screwed, and puts us all under the King’s arrest. It seems my company were Scotchmen in the French service, and had been in Scotland to enlist soldiers for the French army. I endeavoured all I could to prove my innocence; however, I remained in prison with the rest a fortnight, and with difficulty got off even then. Dear Sir, keep this a secret, or at least say it was for debt; for if it were once known at the University, I should hardly get a degree. But hear how Providence interfered in my favour: the ship was gone on to Bourdeaux before I got from prison, and was wrecked at the mouth of the Garonne, and every one of the crew were drowned. It happened the last great storm. There was a ship at that time ready for Holland: I embarked, and in nine days, thank my God, I arrived safe at Rotterdam; whence I travelled by land to Leyden; and whence I now write.

“ You may expect some account of this country; and though I am not well qualified for such an undertaking, yet I shall endeavour to satisfy some part of your expectations. Nothing surprised me more than the books every day published descriptive of the manners of this country. Any young man who takes it into his head to publish his travels, visits the countries he intends to describe; passes through them with as much inattention as his valet de chambre; and consequently not having a fund himself to fill a volume, he applies to those

who wrote before him, and gives us the manners of a country, not as he must have seen them, but such as they might have been fifty years before.

"The modern Dutchman is quite a different creature from him of former times; he in every thing imitates a Frenchman, but in his easy disengaged air, which is the result of keeping polite company. The Dutchman is vastly ceremonious, and is perhaps what a Frenchman might have been in the reign of Louis XIV. Such are the better bred. But the downright Hollander is one of the oddest figures in nature: upon a head of lank hair he wears a half-cocked narrow hat, laced with black riband: no coat, but seven waistcoats, and nine pairs of breeches; so that his hips reach almost up to his armpits. This well-clothed vegetable is now fit to see company, or to make love. But what a pleasing creature is the object of his appetite! Why, she wears a large fur cap with a deal of Flanders lace; and for every pair of breeches he carries, she puts on two petticoats.

"A Dutch lady burns nothing about her phlegmatic admirer but his tobacco. You must know, sir, every woman carries in her hand a stove with coals in it, which when she sits, she snugs under her petticoats: and at this chimney, dozing Strephon lights his pipe. I take it that this continual smoking is what gives the man the ruddy, healthful complexion he generally wears, by draining his superfluous moisture, while the woman, deprived of this amusement, overflows with such viscidities as tint the complexion, and give that paleness of visage which low fenny grounds and moist air conspire to cause.

"A Dutch woman and Scotch will well bear an opposition. The one is pale and fat, the other lean and ruddy: the one walks as if she were straddling after a go-cart, and the other takes too masculine a stride. I shall not endeavour to deprive either country of its share of beauty; but must say, that of all objects on this earth, an English farmer's daughter is most charming. Every woman there is a complete beauty, while the higher class of women want many of the requisites to make them even tolerable. Their pleasures here are very dull, though very various. You may smoke, you may doze, you may go to the Italian comedy,—as good an amusement as either of the former. This entertainment always brings in harlequin, who is generally a magician; and in consequence of his diabolical art, performs a thousand tricks on the rest of the persons of the drama, who are all fools. I have seen the pit in a roar of laughter at this humour, when with his sword he touches the glass from which another was drinking. 'Twas not his face they laughed at, for that was masked. They must have seen something vastly queer in the wooden sword, that neither I, nor you, sir, were you there, could see.*

"In winter, when their canals are frozen, every house is forsaken, and all people are on the ice; sleds drawn by horses, and skating, are at that time the reigning amusements. They have boats here that slide on the ice, and are driven by the winds. When they

* This description of the Dutch drama would seem (by the remarks of Mr. D'Israeli, *Curiosities of Literature*, vol. ii. p. 165,) not to be overcharged.

spread all their sails they go more than a mile and a half a minute, and their motion is so rapid that the eye can scarcely accompany them. Their ordinary manner of travelling is very cheap and very convenient: they sail in covered boats drawn by horses; and in these you are sure to meet people of all nations. Here the Dutch slumber, the French chatter, and the English play at cards. Any man who likes company may have them to his taste. For my part, I generally detached myself from all society, and was wholly taken up in observing the face of the country. Nothing can equal its beauty: wherever I turn my eyes, fine houses, elegant gardens, statues, grottoes, vistas, presented themselves; but when you enter their towns, you are charmed beyond description. No misery is to be seen here: every one is usefully employed.

“Scotland and this country bear the highest contrast. There, hills and rocks intercept every prospect; here, ’tis all a continued plain. There, you might see a well-dressed duchess issuing from a dirty close; and here, a dirty Dutchman inhabiting a palace. The Scotch may be compared to a tulip planted in dung; but I never see a Dutchman in his own house, but I think of a magnificent Egyptian temple dedicated to an ox.

“Physic is by no means taught so well here as in Edinburgh; and in all Leyden there are but four British students, owing to all necessities being so extremely dear, and the professors so very lazy (the chemical professor excepted,) that we don’t much care to come hither. I am not certain how long my stay here may be; however I expect to have the happiness of seeing you at Kilmore, if I can, next March.

“Direct to me, if I am honoured with a letter from you, to Madam Diallion’s at Leyden.

“Thou best of men, may Heaven guard and preserve you, and those you love!

“OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”

Nothing imparts a better idea of the philosophical indifference of the Poet to evils merely temporary or physical, than the little concern expressed about an event that would have been, to other men, a theme of loud and angry complaint—the being imprisoned a fortnight on an unfounded suspicion. His only anxiety seems to have been respecting his degree; and however conscious of innocence, he probably believed, from the equivocal situation in which he was found and the general attachment of the Stuarts then prevailing in Scotland, that difficulties might occur in proving it to the satisfaction of the College authorities. It is believed, that testimonials of conduct and character from his acquaintance in Edinburgh were found necessary previous to his final enlargement.

In Ireland a story is told, that being plunged into further difficulties by the departure of the ship with a portion of his baggage on board, he was recommended to follow her on his release from prison rather than proceed to Holland, but exclaimed with characteristic simplicity, “What is the use of that? Sure it will be sent

after me any where!" Another jest against him, taken like several more from his own writings, has likewise found currency; that in a moment of absence he committed the blunder imputed to the philosophic wanderer in his novel, of proceeding to Holland to teach the natives English, when he himself knew nothing of Dutch. And considering the diversity of route between that which he intended to take and that actually pursued, Bourdeaux and Rotterdam, without stating more explicitly the reasons for deviating so widely from his first route, it may be difficult to disprove any story however absurd, excepting we believe what is probably true, that committing his destiny to chance he cared not on what part of the Continent he was flung.

His first impressions of Holland, and the objects natural and artificial presented to view, were those of admiration and surprise. "A youth just landed at the Brille," he observes,* "resembles a clown at a puppet-show; carries his amazement from one miracle to another; from this cabinet of curiosities to that collection of pictures; but wondering is not the way to grow wise." Extending his view over the country, he tells us in another place, in a sketch at once poetical and accurate, that the ocean—

"Sees an amphibious world beneath him smile;
The slow canal, the yellow blossom'd vale,
The willow-tufted bank, the gliding sail,
The crowded mart, the cultivated plain,
A new creation rescued from his reign."

The character of the people as may be supposed from one of his temperament, is less favourably estimated than by more sober inquirers; not that any importance is to be attached to first opinions, when with the common error of a young man and a young traveller, he attempts to judge the habits and manners of foreigners by the standard of his own country, and stamps their deviations as defects. But he has gone further, and affixed in his poem a general stigma on the Dutch nation, ungenerous and undeserved:—

"Even liberty itself is barter'd here:
At gold's superior charms all freedom flies;
The needy sell it, and the rich man buys:
A land of tyrants and a den of slaves."

Viewed with the eye of a poet, the people of Holland may appear more strongly intent on the pursuit of wealth than of fame or unprofitable honours; but the statesman can never consider them otherwise than with interest and favour, for services rendered on many trying occasions to the commonwealth of Europe. They may not be eminent for oratory or poetry, for wit or ingenuity, for literary acquirements or for winning manners; but they are far from being unlearned, and are otherwise deserving of sincere esteem; they are moral, industrious, and free; they struggled long and

* Inquiry into Polite Learning, Works, vol. i.

bravely for liberty, and obtained it; they had sufficient good sense and reflection to seek, in common with the most enlightened nations of Europe, reformation of the abuses of religion; and if undue love of money be a vice, it is at least more useful to their country, and more innocent in itself, than that devotion to pleasure and laxity of morals characteristic of some of their neighbours.

“On another occasion he could be more just. “The best and most useful laws I have ever seen are generally practised in Holland. When two men are determined to go to law with each other, they are first obliged to go before the reconciling judges, called the *peacemakers*. If the parties come attended by an advocate or solicitor, they are obliged to retire, as we take fuel from the fire we are desirous of extinguishing.”*

The Dutch he likewise preferred to the Flemings:—the distinction drawn between two of their chief towns exhibits something of the superiority of national character which exists even more strongly in the present day. “In Rotterdam you may go through eight or ten streets without finding a public house. In Antwerp almost every second house seems an ale-house. In the one city, all wears the appearance of happiness and warm affluence; in the other, the young fellows walk about the streets in shabby finery; their fathers sit at the door darning or knitting stockings, while their ports are filled with dunghills.”

At Leyden he is said to have been less attentive to the acquisition of professional than miscellaneous knowledge, particularly a more familiar acquaintance with the language and literature of France, preparatory to an intended tour through that country. Physic, he remarks, was not so well taught there as in Edinburgh, and he charges the professors, excepting one, with inactivity. Yet the celebrated Albinus was then professor of anatomy; a laborious author and editor, whose anatomical plates were not merely the most accurate, but the most splendid things of that description seen in Europe. The chemical professor, possessed of at least equal reputation, was Gaubius, and him he exempts from the general imputation: with this eminent person, as an admirer of the science which he taught, he was probably more intimate; and of whom, when stating that among the universities abroad he had ever observed their stupidity in reciprocal proportion to their opulence, he relates the following remarks:—

“Happening once, in conversation with Gaubius of Leyden, to mention the College of Edinburgh, he began by complaining that all the English students who formerly came to his university, now went entirely there; and the fact surprised him more, as Leyden was now as well as ever furnished with masters excellent in their respective professions. He concluded by asking if the professors at Edinburgh were rich. I replied that the salary of a professor there seldom amounted to more than thirty pounds a year. ‘Poor men!’ says he,

* Bee, No. v. Upon Political Frugality. Works, vol. i.

‘I heartily wish they were better provided for; until they become rich, we can have no expectation of English students at Leyden.’ ”*

Of the few young men of that description then resident there, one was his countryman, Dr. Ellis, who, having graduated in Dublin, had visited Leyden to extend his knowledge. He continued there for two or three years, commencing on his return a course of philosophical lectures in the Irish metropolis, and subsequently it is believed, settled as physician in Monaghan, whence he removed to Dublin on being appointed clerk to the Irish House of Commons. He died in 1791.† From accounts given by this gentleman in conversation in various societies in Dublin, it appears that the Poet was often in his usual pecuniary distress; sometimes reduced to great straits, obliged to borrow small sums from such as could afford to lend until his own remittances arrived, or other mode of repayment offered: occasionally he taught his native language; and sometimes resorted to play, frequently the forlorn hope of the necessitous as well as the amusement of the idle or the dissipated, in the hope by some lucky effort of extricating himself from difficulties. Such habits we may lament more than condemn, for the needy are almost necessarily among the irregular in conduct; and it requires some self-denial and strength of mind to prevent poverty from relaxing even rigid morality. But it had little influence on his good humour; he was usually gay and cheerful; and when taxed with imprudence for risking such small sums as he possessed, admitted the fact and promised amendment for the future. In all his peculiarities it was remarked there was about him an elevation of mind, a philosophical tone and manner, which added to the language and information of a scholar made him an object of interest to such as could estimate character.

Having had a successful run at play, according to Dr. Ellis, Goldsmith called upon that gentleman the following morning, and counted out a considerable sum, which he was advised not again to trust to chance, but hoard as a provision for future necessities. This recommendation he promised to follow, and probably meant to fulfil; but he was again seduced to the scene of his former success, and with the usual lot of the dupes to this passion, lost the whole of what he had previously gained.

At Leyden, from the information to be obtained at present, he took no degree;‡ but having resided there about a year, formed the

* Inquiry into Polite Learning, Works, vol. i.

† From the information of M. Weld Hartstonge, Esq. of Dublin, to whose politeness the writer is indebted for several inquiries connected with this work, and whose recent death he has, in common with others, to lament.

‡ “Mr. Hudson presents his compliments to Mr. Prior, and begs to inform him, that Dr. Wenckebach of Breda has had the kindness to request of Professor Reinwardt to ascertain, from the Album Academicum of the University of Leyden, whether Goldsmith was a student from 1754 to 1756, or whether any degree was conferred upon him by that University; and the result of the inquiry is in each case in the negative.” It was not then usual, perhaps, to record the names of all students.

resolution to travel, in defiance of want of the necessary pecuniary means. Privation and hardship being habitual to one so frequently suffering from straitened finances, presented a less forbidding aspect to him than to most other men. He possessed an ardent curiosity, a buoyant spirit, and a constitutional inclination to look rather to the bright than dark side of the prospect; a disposition in some degree national, for it is a well known and avowed peculiarity of the lower orders of his countrymen, to put as large a share of their faith in chance as in conduct, in much of the business of life. Reliance was, no doubt, placed upon his own ingenuity, his learning, and medical knowledge: he was young; his frame, though short in stature, vigorous and accustomed to fatiguing exercises; he had learned from others of his countrymen, occasional visitors at Leyden from the continental universities, that travelling presented fewer difficulties than might be supposed; and he expected in the chief towns to find friends or occasional remittances from home. Something of the romantic interest attending such an enterprise undertaken in such a manner, is lost from its having of late been accomplished by several naval and military officers, who by skilful and rigid economy, have traversed Flanders, France, Switzerland, and parts of Germany on foot at trifling expense, which, as they state, had circumstances required it, might have been reduced to a still smaller sum.

A more immediate encouragement to meet the difficulties of the enterprise, was probably the knowledge that it had been before accomplished by a literary adventurer worse provided than himself, the Baron Louis de Holberg, who had then (1754) recently died. The outline of his story, as given by Goldsmith, shows that this example was in his eye, and in fact became the model of his conduct:—

“The history of polite learning in Denmark may be comprised in the life of one single man; it rose and fell with the late famous Baron Holberg. This was, perhaps, one of the most extraordinary personages that has done honour to the present century. His being the son of a private centinel did not abate the ardour of his ambition, for he learned to read without a master. Upon the death of his father, being left entirely destitute, he was involved in all that distress which is common among the poor, and of which the great have scarce any idea. However, though only a boy of nine years old, he still persisted in pursuing his studies, travelled about from school to school, and begged his learning and his bread.

“When at the age of seventeen, instead of applying himself to any of the lower occupations, which seem best adapted to such circumstances, he was resolved to travel, for improvement, from Norway, the place of his birth, to Copenhagen, the capital city of Denmark. He lived here by teaching French, at the same time avoiding no opportunity of improvement that his scanty funds would permit. But his ambition was not to be restrained, or his thirst of knowledge satisfied until he had seen the world. *Without money, recommendations, or friends, he undertook to set out upon his travels, and make the tour of Europe on foot. A good voice and a trifling skill in music*

were the only finances he had to support an undertaking so extensive ; so he travelled by day, and at night sang at the doors of peasants' houses, to get himself a lodging. In this manner young Holberg passed through France, Germany, and Holland, and, coming over to England, took up his residence in the University of Oxford. Here he subsisted by teaching French and music, and wrote his Universal History, his earliest but worst performance. Furnished with all the learning of Europe, he at last thought proper to return to Copenhagen, where his ingenious productions quickly gained him that favour he deserved. He composed not less than eighteen comedies ; those in his own language are said to excel, and those which are wrote in French have peculiar merit. He was honoured with nobility, and enriched by the bounty of the King ; so that a life, begun in contempt and penury, ended in opulence and esteem."*

When about to quit Leyden, his purse being at a low ebb, application was made to Dr. Ellis for assistance, but an effort of affectionate gratitude of the borrower towards his uncle, rendered the supply received from that gentleman of little use. For having wandered into the garden of a florist whose productions he had admired during the summer, and some of which were at one time raised into an extravagantly fictitious value in Holland, the recollection of Mr. Contarine's taste for the cultivation of those beautiful productions, induced him to purchase a supply of the roots for transmission to Ireland. This imprudence, as it may be considered in a situation so impoverished, left him by the statement of the lender, with scarcely any money, and but one clean shirt, to set forward. Probably there is in this some error : he may have been poor enough, but reports of extreme destitution, like that of great wealth, are sometimes exaggerated for the sake of effect.

Few particulars of this tour are accurately known, while recent and diligent inquiries have thrown only small additional light on the subject. He kept no journal, wrote only occasionally to his friends, though as we know he gave the Rev. Mr. Percy verbally an outline of his route, which might have been rendered sufficiently complete and probably very amusing, had the requisite questions which he alone could answer, been put at the moment. No more than one or two of his letters, written from the Continent, although several were remembered by Mrs. Hodson, are believed to be now in existence. These were first traced to Roscommon, next to Dublin, back again to a different part of the same county, thence to Greenock in Scotland, from this again to Ireland, next to Brighton, afterwards to Passy near Paris, and finally to England, besides letters on the same errand to Nice and Nova Scotia ; and though the clue is not wholly lost, the writer has failed to obtain their perusal. In conversation he is known to have occasionally detailed incidents in his adventures, the particulars of which are now forgotten ; others, and from his destitute condition perhaps the most curious, he probably never did or would, from very excusable reserve, disclose to any one. But his

* Inquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning. See Works, vol. i.

condition is pretty plainly intimated in the expressive lines commencing the Traveller and marking nearly the extreme points of his journey—

*“ Remote, unfriended, melancholy, slow,
Or by the lazy Scheldt or wandering Po,”—*

and the descriptive account in the same poem of the French peasantry.

The only detailed account probably committed by him to paper, was a letter to Doctor Radcliff, fellow of Trinity College, who having occasionally lectured Wilder's pupils and being an amiable man, was applied to by Goldsmith on his return from the Continent for a favour hereafter to be mentioned, and in return wrote him an account of his travels. The letter was long, and in the opinion of that gentleman, one of the most able and interesting of all his productions. Nothing except its general purport is remembered, the original being consumed by a fire which destroyed the house of the Doctor, and the greater part of the street (Great Cuffe Street, Dublin) in which he resided. It had been deposited with others of his letters for greater security in the plate chest, which a servant on the alarm of fire being given, rushed up stairs to save, but by mistake siezed another of similar appearance filled with books of divinity; and there was no time to return and rectify the error. The plate and letters were therefore destroyed.*

Incidents connected with his own adventures occur no doubt in the story of what he terms a ‘philosophic vagabond’ in the Vicar of Wakefield; not literally true perhaps in detail, but with such variations as suited a work of imagination, leaving himself at liberty by this arrangement of denying or admitting the accuracy of such parts as he thought proper. In familiar moments, he confessed his poverty, his musical efforts to amuse the peasantry, and his disputations at seats of learning; other hints may be gleaned from the Traveller and Inquiry into Polite Learning; and other circumstances again, it is obvious, were wholly imaginary, or represented differently from what really occurred. Thus, he makes his hero embark for Holland to teach the natives English without knowing Dutch; lands him at Amsterdam instead of Rotterdam; takes him to Louvain to teach the professors Greek; says nothing of Leyden, or of Switzerland, and no more of Italy than that his pupil embarked for England at Leghorn; while this person, described as inheriting the property of an uncle in the West Indies, was said to have really been heir to a well known pawnbroker in Holborn, of great wealth, named Smyth, or Smyly.

He set out about February 1755; a proof, perhaps, of being better furnished with resources than is supposed by choosing such a season. One of his chief resting places in Flanders is said to have been

* Communicated to the writer by Dr. Radcliff, Judge of the Prerogative Court in Dublin, to whose father the letters were addressed.

Louvain, not to instruct the professors in the manner humorously mentioned in the novel, but to gain some knowledge of its learning and system of discipline: for the remark put into the mouth of his hero, speaking of literary topics, held true with regard to himself, "I always forgot the meanness of my circumstances when I could converse upon such subjects." Here he was said, in a short memoir published after his death, written by a person named Glover, known as an occasional acquaintance, to have taken a degree of M. B. It is doubtful, however, whether such intermediate step to the Doctorate is common in the universities on the Continent, though certainly granted in some; the records of Louvain however for that period are lost*; the statement, therefore, cannot be disproved, but from a comparison of circumstances it is improbable. At Antwerp he spent a short time, and likewise at Brussels: in the former he saw and spoke of a criminal, whose gayety though maimed, deformed and suffering the punishment of chains and slavery for life, is made the subject of one of his essays†; and at Maestricht examined an extensive and well known cavern, or stone quarry, an object of interest then to travellers.

In France, judging from admissions in works both of fact and fiction, his adventures seem to have been as unusual as his situation, and they are turned to his usual benevolent purpose of showing the poorer classes in an amiable light. "I had some knowledge of music," he says in the *Vicar of Wakefield*, "with a tolerable voice, and now turned what was my amusement into a present means of subsistence. I passed among the harmless peasants of Flanders, and among such of the French as were poor enough to be very merry; for I ever found them sprightly in proportion to their wants. Whenever I approached a peasant's house towards night-fall, I played one of my most merry tunes, and that procured me not only a lodging, but subsistence for the next day. I once or twice attempted to play for people of fashion; but they always thought my performance odious, and never rewarded me even with a trifle."

No ordinary love of learning, of novelty, of acquaintance with men and manners, or of persevering determination to examine them all as far as circumstances permitted, could induce any one to subject himself to such a precarious existence; yet we know, by what has been stated and by specific avowal of the fact in his poem, that such was occasionally his condition. One of the spots where, and

* From the Abbé de Foere, Chaplain to the English Nuns at Bruges, the following letter has been received by the writer:

"SIR,

"Bruges, June 19, 1832.

"My friends at the University of Louvain have perused the annals of that famous school, and have made every possible inquiry to get some information about Oliver Goldsmith, but they did not succeed. The annals of that period, including the years 1754—55—56, are wanting, and probably lost during the various disturbances our country underwent since the latter end of the last century. I am sorry, Sir, I have not been able to answer your inquiries in a more satisfactory way. I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

"DE FOERE."

† "Happiness dependent on Constitution." Bce, Oct. 13, 1759. Works, vol. i.

the mode in which, this musical skill was exerted, and even the degree of that skill so exactly correspondent with fact, for his performance was not first-rate, is thus minutely and poetically painted :—

“How often have I led thy sportive choir,
With tuneless pipe, beside the murmuring Loire!
Where shading elms along the margin grew,
And freshened from the wave the zephyr flew;
And haply, though my harsh touch, faltering still,
But mock’d all tune and marr’d the dancer’s skill,
Yet would the village praise my wondrous power,
And dance forgetful of the noon-tide hour.”

His mode of travelling is again expressly intimated in a work of fact:—“Countries wear very different appearances to travellers of different circumstances. A man who is whirled through Europe in a post chaise, and the pilgrim who walks the grand tour on foot, will form very different conclusions. *Haud inexpertus loquor.*”*

At Paris he attended the lectures of Rouelle, an eminent professor of chemistry, who first ascertained the composition of the diamond by submitting it to combustion. In allusion to the scientific tastes of the fair sex of that day in that metropolis, he says, in the work just quoted, “I have seen as bright a circle of beauty at the chemical lectures of Rouelle as gracing the court of Versailles.”

While here, he wrote to Ireland for pecuniary assistance, intimating his wants in a simple yet humorous strain.† Here likewise he met several persons he knew; a Mr. Macdonnell of Dublin, a gentleman from Roscommon, whose name is forgotten, and a few college acquaintances from Dublin and Edinburgh.

It would appear he had the honour of an introduction to Voltaire in Paris, which probably produced the admiration of the genius of that extraordinary person, found in some of his subsequent writings. Two allusions are made to this honour; one in a letter in the Public Ledger, another in an account of his Life hereafter to be noticed:—

“I remember to have heard Mr. Voltaire observe in a large company at his house at Monrion, that at the battle of Dettingen the English exhibited prodigies of valour; but they soon lessened their well-bought conquest by lessening the merit of those they had conquered.”

In the memoir, he enters more into detail of his usual manner in conversation:—

“In the year 1720 Mr. Voltaire came over to England. A previous acquaintance with Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester, and the Lord Bolingbroke, was sufficient to introduce him among the polite, and his fame as a poet got him the acquaintance of the learned, in a

* Inquiry into Polite Learning, 1759, p. 161. In the second edition, published in 1774 with his name, the Latin clause—probably a sacrifice to pride—was omitted. See Works, vol. i.

† A copy of this letter was once in the possession of Mr. Carleton, nephew of the late nobleman of that name, who gave it to a Miss Metcalf, now dead; among whose papers it has not been found. Other copies are known to be in London, but from some unaccountable illiberality, are withheld.

country where foreigners generally find but a cool reception. He only wanted introduction; his own merit was enough to procure the rest. As a companion no man ever exceeded him when he pleased to lead the conversation; which, however, was not always the case. In company which he either disliked or despised, few could be more reserved than he; but when he was warmed in discourse, and had got over a hesitating manner which sometimes he was subject to, it was rapture to hear him. His meager visage seemed insensibly to gather beauty, every muscle in it had meaning, and his eye beamed with unusual brightness.

"The person who writes this memoir, who had the honour and the pleasure of being his acquaintance, remembers to have seen him in a select company of wits of both sexes at Paris, when the subject happened to turn upon English taste and learning. Fontenelle, who was of the party, and who, being unacquainted with the language or authors of the country he undertook to condemn, with a spirit truly vulgar began to revile both. Diderot, who liked the English, and knew something of their literary pretensions, attempted to vindicate their poetry and learning, but with unequal abilities. The company quickly perceived that Fontenelle was superior in the dispute, and were surprised at the silence which Voltaire had preserved all the former part of the night, particularly as the conversation turned upon one of his favourite topics.

"Fontenelle continued his triumph till about twelve o'clock, when Voltaire appeared at last roused from his reverie. His whole frame seemed animated. He began his defence with the utmost elegance, mixed with spirit, and now and then let fall the finest strokes of raillery upon his antagonist; and his harangue lasted till three in the morning. I must confess that, whether from national partiality or from the elegant sensibility of his manner, I never was so much charmed, nor did I ever remember so absolute a victory as he gained in this dispute."

One of the few allusions to his abode in Paris at this time, is the following from "*Animated Nature*," vol. v. p. 207:—

"I never walked out about the environs of Paris, that I did not consider the immense quantity of game that was running almost tame on every side of me, as a badge of the slavery of the people; and what they wished me to observe as an object of triumph, I always regarded with a kind of secret compassion: yet this people have no game laws for the remoter parts of the kingdom."

By the recommendation of some of the friends found in this capital, he accompanied an English gentleman to Switzerland, taking the route of Strasburgh; and crossing the Rhine, remained a short time in Germany. At this time, therefore, for he is not known to have visited it subsequently, such knowledge as he possessed of that country seems to have been acquired; not, we may believe, of a very minute description, as no sketch of country or people is attempted in the "*Traveller*." The "*Inquiry into Polite Learning*" censures with some justice its innumerable critics and commentators as destructive of true taste and genius; but the following

scene from the learned institutions of that country, although drawn eighty years ago, was even then probably overcharged:—

“But let the Germans have their due; if they are often a little dull, no nation alive assumes a more laudable solemnity, or better understands all the little decorums of stupidity. Let the discourse of a professor run on never so heavily, it cannot be irksome to his dozing pupils, who frequently lend him their sympathetic nods of approbation. I have sometimes attended their disputes at gradation. On this occasion they often dispense with learned gravity, and seem really all alive. The disputes are managed between the followers of Cartesius, whose exploded system they call the new philosophy, and those of Aristotle. Though both parties are wrong, they argue with an obstinacy worthy the cause of truth; *Nego, Probo, and Distinguo* grow loud. The disputants grow warm, the moderator cannot be heard, the audience take part in the debate, till at last the whole hall buzzes with erroneous philosophy.”

Entering Switzerland, he visited the falls of Schaffhausen, either at an early period of the year, or when the season was more than usually late; for in speaking of rivers, and such cataracts as neither time nor art are likely to remove, he says, “Of this kind are the cataracts of the Rhine, one of which I have seen exhibit a very strange appearance; it was that at Schaffhausen, which was frozen quite across, and the water stood in columns where the cataract had formerly fallen.”*

In this country he remained for some time, visiting Basle, Berne, and other places of note or interest, but fixing more permanently at Geneva. Every part presented something romantic and gratifying to the eye or the imagination; and contemplation of such scenery as he had never witnessed, and scarcely conceived, acting upon a susceptible and reflective mind with all the force of novelty and grandeur, seems to have first produced the disposition to clothe his thoughts and observations in the garb of poetry. To a poetical mind the excitement was irresistible. From Switzerland, he expressly tells us, the first sketch of the “Traveller” was sent to his brother.

Hilly countries, which poetical theorists are prone to consider favourable to the production of poets, may perhaps more truly be said rather to draw out their faculty, than to create it. Persons are seldom excited by what is familiar to them; and a native of mountainous regions cannot be supposed to view with enthusiasm what is daily under his eye. Mountains are not in fact in any country prolific in men of high mental powers; genius is rarely developed there; the people are more rude; wealth and comfort, which with a few exceptions seem essential to the cultivation of intellect, less frequent; and the resort of strangers thither, which has its share in contributing to knowledge, only occasional and temporary. Switzerland has not produced her proportion of eminent men; and if any

* *Animated Nature*, vol. i. p. 221. Ed. 1774.

part of our own country be scant of celebrated names, it is Wales and the highlands of Scotland.

But to him familiar only with the plains, who has not seen Nature in her grander aspects and varieties, such countries burst upon the view with all the freshness and interest of a new world, and rarely fail powerfully to impress minds the most ignorant and unimpassioned. To the poet and the philosopher they become a study; create a new train of ideas and associations; and while the former is tempted to dwell upon the variety, the novelty, and the magnificence of nature, the latter will be not less inquisitive respecting their moral attributes, and their influences on the condition and character of the people. Uniting both characters within himself, Goldsmith sat down to meditate upon and describe what he saw, and under such circumstances the first draught of the "Traveller" was made; with what truth of description and vigour of sentiment need not be said, for he has left little for succeeding poets touching upon the same countries to add. All traces of this sketch, transmitted as he informs us, to his brother Henry in Ireland, and consisting of about seventy or eighty lines according to current report among his relatives, are now lost; being considered probably of no further value when the poem had been published.

From Geneva he made excursions on foot to the Alpine ranges in the vicinity, with which he afterwards professed to be very conversant in the knowledge of their localities. The time occupied in this way was the early part of the summer of 1755, as may be inferred from that passage in the "Traveller" where, in describing the country, we are told, either in allusion to the severity of the season when he was there, or the lateness of spring generally, that

"No vernal blooms their torpid rocks array,
But winter lingering chills the lap of May."

A more precise statement of the time appears in the "History of Animated Nature." Speaking of woodcocks being found in the Alps all the summer, he says, "I myself have flushed them, on the top of Mount Jura, in June and July." A few other notices of his familiarity with this region occur in parts of the same work. Adverting to an erroneous though prevalent idea, of the sense of taste being impaired by the state of the air on the tops of mountains, he denies it: "All substances have their tastes as well on the tops of mountains as in the bottom of the valley; and I have been one of many who have ate a very savoury dinner on the Alps." Speaking of sheep on another occasion, he says there is but one proof of their attachment to persons. "What I allude to is their following the sound of the shepherd's pipe. Before I had seen them trained in this manner, I had no conception of those descriptions of the old pastoral poets, of the shepherd leading his flock from one country to another. As I had been used only to see these harmless creatures driven before their keepers, I supposed that all the rest

was but invention; but in many parts of the Alps, and even some provinces of France, the shepherd and his pipe are still continued with true antique simplicity."

At this city he is said to have had consigned to him the care of a young gentleman travelling to the south of France and to Italy; but the connexion according to the same accounts, was dissolved upon the borders of the latter country, the pupil to embark at Marseilles for England, and the tutor to pursue his tour in penury and on foot. The degree of credibility due to this story, repeated by all the early memoir writers, is not precisely ascertained. Bishop Percy without denying its truth, felt disposed to attribute its origin to the story told by the Vicar of Wakefield's son. It is certain it was not among the memoranda dictated to that prelate at Northumberland House; while it is equally true, that many more important particulars of his life, from the hurried, perhaps unpremeditated nature of the communication, were omitted on the same occasion. Such an event, if it ever occurred, might not have been thought worthy of notice by himself in a statement not meant to be detailed or minute; or the recollection might have been unpleasant from some circumstances of the quarrel; or he may have been influenced at this period as we know him to have been on other points, by the reserve, common to most men, of withholding from general knowledge during life the difficulties and struggles which marked its commencement.

That some such connexion was formed appears probable, from consideration of all the circumstances:—the habit of the Poet to tell something of himself, however tinged with fiction; the very probable occurrence of a tutorship, which would enable him to travel to advantage; the contrasted characters of tutor and pupil, of which the former so much resembled his own; the seeming truth of the detail, as given in the novel, and the name of the uncle of the youth being known; and finally, the cause of the premature separation, which from the allusions dropped, and the very different estimates formed of the value of money by the governor and the governed, we may readily believe to have been pecuniary matters. Between the improvident and the parsimonious, there can be no permanent bond of union: if positive antipathy be not engendered between persons of such opposite qualities, their acquaintance never ripens into friendship, for they cannot pardon the peculiarities of each other. The improvidence of the poor always astonishes the wealthy. The avarice of the rich, on the other hand, is ever incomprehensible to the poor; it is the first peculiarity of character they notice, and probably the last which they forget or forgive; and in sketching the following character, it is difficult to believe that Goldsmith, whose disposition was so opposite to that of his presumed companion, did not copy from the life:—

"I was to be the young gentleman's governor, but with a proviso that he should always be permitted to govern himself. My pupil, in fact, understood the art of guiding in money concerns much better than I. He was heir to a fortune of about two hundred

thousand pounds, left him by an uncle in the West Indies; and his guardians, to qualify him for the management of it, had bound him apprentice to an attorney. Thus, avarice was his prevailing passion; all his questions on the road were, how money might be saved,—which was the least expensive course of travel,—whether any thing could be bought that would turn to account when disposed of again in London? Such curiosities on the way as could be seen for nothing, he was ready enough to look at; but if the sight of them was to be paid for, he usually asserted that he had been told that they were not worth seeing. He never paid a bill that he would not observe how amazingly expensive travelling was; and all this though not yet twenty-one. When arrived at Leghorn, as we took a walk to look at the port and shipping, he inquired the expense of the passage by sea home to England. This he was informed was but a trifle compared to his returning by land; he was therefore unable to withstand the temptation; so, paying me the small part of my salary that was due, he took leave, and embarked with only one attendant for London.”

Italy was now before him: and who, at some period of life, has not yearned to visit a region consecrated in imagination by the remembrance of its ancient reputation, by its poetry, heroism, and power; its literature, oratory, and art?

Descending into Piedmont, we find an allusion to the fact of his acquaintance with that country, in noticing a part of its rural economy, the management of bees, where in the case of flowers being scarce or exhausted in the place, the insects are made to change their neighbourhood for fresh supplies, by a simple and efficacious plan of their owners:—“For a knowledge of this, in some parts of France and Piedmont, they have contrived, as I have often seen, a kind of floating bee-house. They have on board one barge three-score or a hundred bee-hives, well defended from the inclemency of an accidental storm; and with these, the owners suffer themselves to float gently down the river. As the bees are continually choosing their flowery pasture along the banks of the stream, they are furnished with sweets before unrifled; and thus a single floating bee-house yields the proprietor a considerable income. Why a method similar to this has never been adopted in England, where we have more gentle rivers and more flowery banks than in any other part of the world, I know not; certainly, it might be turned to advantage and yield the possessor a secure, though, perhaps a moderate income.”

In his progress he visited Florence, Verona, Mantua, Milan, and, crossing the base of the Peninsula to the eastern shore, frequently meeting what he terms “the wandering Po,” found an object of much interest in Venice; personally, from its connexion with the origin of his uncle Contarine’s family; poetically, by associations arising from the popular productions of English genius: though even her accredited history resembles a portion of romance. Carinthia was likewise visited; and being once questioned by Mr. Hickey on the justice of the censure passed upon a people whom

other travellers praised for being as good if not better than their neighbours—

“Or onward, where the rude Carinthian boor
Against the houseless stranger shuts the door,”—

gave as a reason his being once after a fatiguing day's walk, obliged to quit a house he had entered for shelter, and pass part or the whole of the night in seeking another. His progress there is no reason to doubt was attended by much privation, but supported with a spirit that penury and loneliness could not daunt.

At Padua, attracted by its medical and literary reputation, he remained a few months, acquiring more intimate acquaintance with the language and literature of the people of this portion of Italy. Among the learned, that University then stood high, and the coincidence may be worthy of remark, in men afterwards so celebrated for their talents and intimacy, that Dr. Johnson, when at college, had an ambition to visit the same seat of learning, but only contemplated in prospect what Goldsmith, with more energy, and under the most disadvantageous circumstances, accomplished in person. “Well,” said the former, in a loud soliloquy in his room, which happened to be overheard by Dr. Panting, then master of Pembroke College, “I have a mind to see what is done in other places of learning. I'll go and visit the universities abroad. *I'll go to France and Italy. I'll go to Padua.* And I'll mind my business.”*

Here he is supposed to have taken his medical degree, although no satisfactory proof of the matter can be gleaned after minute inquiries. But it is suggested by competent authority in such matters, that it may have been obtained in some other university after one of the disputations in their halls, in which by his own admission, he engaged. The record of the names of students in this University, is also said to be defective or lost.

While pursuing professional and general learning, he appears to have examined the character and manners of the nation with some degree of minuteness. The result was not favourable to its literary or moral state. In the “Traveller,” the “Inquiry into Polite Learning,” and in that exquisite specimen of the frivolity of some of their literary, or supposed literary, associations, their “*filosofi and virtuosi*,” first printed in “The Bee,” giving an account of the academies of Italy, we see his opinions at length. He found a people more proud of their past, than striving to attain present reputation; *Stat nominis umbra*; ardent indeed and impassioned in character, but this ardour thrown away rather upon the amusements of life than upon its paramount duties and its business; the arts valued extremely high; but men, in their social condition, character, and qualities which must ever form the great test of high civilisation, neglected. He found despotic governments, without external strength or internal respectability; a religion, imposing in its forms, but un-

* Croker's Boswell, vol. i. p. 42.

successful in securing morality of conduct from the people, and, as he says in another place, "with the property of contracting the sphere of the understanding;" and learning, as he believed, on the decline. When afterwards induced to give utterance to similar opinions in the societies of London, Baretti, Martinelli, and other Italians, took him sharply to task for presuming to characterize a people and country of whom he knew little. Both were occasionally rude to him on this account. But he seems not to have erred materially, or Italy must consider herself peculiarly unfortunate in appearing in a similar light to most other English travellers.*

It appears he did not visit Rome and Naples, finding either his resources exhausted, or dreading that the then impending contest between England and France would interfere with the homeward journey through the latter country. Toward the end of 1755 he set out on his return to England. On this occasion his difficulties are believed to have been greater than at any former period; he had now however, another resource, which, when opportunities offered, was rendered available for procuring temporary supplies, while it exhibited his ingenuity, practised his memory, and drew forth his stores of learning. It is told in the work of fiction already alluded to, as a resource of the "philosophic vagabond," and was universally understood, and indeed avowed, to apply to himself:—

"My skill in music could avail me nothing in a country (Italy) where every peasant was a better musician than I; but by this time I had acquired another talent, which answered my purpose as well, and this was a skill in disputation. In all the foreign universities and convents, there are upon certain days philosophical theses maintained against every adventitious disputant: for which, if the champion opposes with any dexterity, he can claim a gratuity in money, a dinner, and a bed for one night. In this manner, then, I fought my way towards England, walked along from city to city, examined mankind more nearly, and, if I may so express it, saw both sides of the picture."

Convents in most parts of the Continent were at that time pretty numerously tenanted by natives of Ireland; and wherever such were found, he profited by the accidental advantage of birth-place, as well as of his learning, to claim assistance at their hands. That he met acquaintance who may have occasionally supplied his wants, there is no doubt; one instance may be inferred from the following incident, or the allusion may apply to a domestic of his pupil:—"A friend of mine," he says, speaking of the bite of the tarantula in Italy, and the erroneous stories told of its effects and of their reputed mode of cure by dancing, "*had a servant who suffered himself to be bit; the wound, which was little larger than the puncture of a pin, was uneasy for a few hours, and then became well without any fur-*

* Lord Orrery, a traveller and a clever man, and with the best opportunities for observation, in a letter from Florence, shortly before, (Dec. 1754,) seems to have formed no more favourable opinion of the people than Goldsmith:—"The truth is, few parts of Italy abound with men of learning. The clergy rather cultivate the political than the classical sciences, and the nobility cultivate no sciences at all."

ther assistance. Some of the country people, however, still make a tolerable livelihood of the credulity of strangers, as the musician finds his account in it not less than the dancer.*

After entering France, his music became again in requisition; more perhaps on the homeward than even on the outward journey, as his necessities were greater. Assistance derived from this source could do little more than supply the exigencies of the moment; his wants at other periods must have been pressing; his obligations to individual charity necessarily great and frequent. Writing to his brother-in-law at a future time, we have the admission, in allusion to pecuniary difficulties in their family,—“These things give me real uneasiness, and I could wish to redress them: but at present there is hardly a kingdom in Europe in which I am not a debtor.” With something like bitterness of spirit from the recollection of what he had endured, or censure of himself for undertaking such a scheme so ill provided, the supposed adventures in the novel, shadowed out so much resembling his own, are termed those of a “philosophic vagabond, pursuing novelty and losing content.”

The kindness of the French peasantry impressed him in favour of the nation at large; increased probably by that similarity, obvious to a nice observer, which exists between their general character and that of his own countrymen. He saw and felt perhaps how soon on the soil of France the French and Irish assimilate; so much sooner and closer than the English and French. He could not overlook the same sociability of disposition; the same hospitality and good nature towards strangers; the same lightness of heart and volatility of temper; the same enjoyment of the present and disregard of the future; the same desire “to please and be pleased” with all around them; and even that vanity, or “beggar pride” as he terms it, to appear to others something greater or better than they really are. Nor did the peculiarity probably escape him, that both nations so joyous and generous in their quiet state, should exhibit when excited the extremes of fierceness and cruelty.

While marking the social peculiarities of the people, their political condition was not forgotten; he appears to have clearly observed the slow and almost silent operation of a new and formidable principle at that time taking root in the public mind of France. The prophecy as to the probable results is singular, and proved much nearer its accomplishment than he believed:—“As the Swedes are making concealed approaches to despotism, the French, on the other hand, are imperceptibly vindicating themselves into freedom. When I consider that these Parliaments, the members of which are all created by the Court (the Presidents of which can only act by immediate direction,) presume even to mention privileges and freedom, who till of late received directions from the throne with implicit humility; when this is considered, I cannot help fancying that the genius of freedom has entered that kingdom in disguise. If they have

* Animated Nature, vol. ii. p. 171. Lond. 1774.

but three weak monarchs more successively on the throne, the mask will be laid aside, and the country will certainly once more be free.”*

CHAPTER VI.

Arrival in England.—Early struggles in London.—Becomes usher in the school of Dr. Milner at Peckham.—Engages in the *Monthly Review*.—Dr. James Grainger.

EARLY in the year 1756 he reached England, having spent about two years on the Continent; and London, as the general resort of talent and necessity, became his first object. Here his prospects were of the most discouraging nature. Whatever advances he had made in learning, or in the knowledge of mankind in the abstract, he had made none in what is more commonly considered the practical business of life. It was doubtful what course to pursue for a livelihood; he was in, to him, a strange land; he possessed neither friends nor money; and laboured under the disadvantage of being an Irishman, which at that period as he says in one of his letters, formed of itself an obstacle to gaining employment.

Some obscurity exists as to the exact incidents of his life on revisiting England, of the order in which they preceded each other, or whether his first attempt to obtain a livelihood was in the medical or scholastic profession. Much of his early career, of what was known to many acquaintance during his life is now forgotten, although in this and other details he may not have thought it necessary to be explicit to such as were likely to record them; unwilling to disclose struggles which were unsuccessful or involving details distressing to his pride. Yet we know that hints and allusions fell from him in conversation, casting partial light on parts of his history, which it would have been indelicate nevertheless to pursue by direct questions further than he thought proper to go. After his death, an anonymous contributor to the newspapers stated, that the Poet having been bred to pharmacy had attempted to practise as an apothecary in a country town, but failing of success, proceeded to London and accepted the situation of usher to Dr. Milner. A contradiction to the former part of this account soon appeared, which brought forth the following rejoinder: it must be remembered that the authority is anonymous, although there seems no inducement for wilful misstatement or that the writer had not sufficient authority for what

* It is remarkable that Burke was impressed with the same idea; first in 1768, in his pamphlet in reply to one of Mr. George Grenville; and again in 1771, on his return from a visit to that country. If the coincidence of opinion be accidental, it is curious; but as Goldsmith was prior in time, Burke may have been led to consider the subject by hearing his observations.

he says:—"A writer in a daily paper pretends to contradict some part of our account of the late Dr. Goldsmith. He says, the Doctor was not bred to pharmacy, and that he did not set up as an apothecary in a country town *in Ireland*. We never said that he set up *in Ireland*. The country town alluded to is an English town, the name of which is forgotten. But the writer of this and the former paragraph assures the public, that he had the anecdote from the Doctor's own mouth. As to what the writer mentions of the Doctor having been a student in Edinburgh after he left Ireland, and then travelling into Germany and other parts of Europe, it is very true, and to that circumstance the public is probably indebted for his pretty poem of the 'Traveller.' " *

A rumour (mentioned by Mr. English who conducted the Annual Register for twenty years after Burke relinquished it) prevailed about the year 1766, of his having once attempted the stage in the line of low comedy, in a country town, when pressed for the means of subsistence. Whether this story was circulated in jest or earnest, may be doubted; want makes us familiar with strange pursuits as with strange acquaintance; and as the scheme may have seemed to him to require little preliminary knowledge and no introduction, it is just possible some such resource was tried in making his way from the coast to London, destitute as he avowedly was of money. The greater probability indeed is, that like some other stories told of him it had no foundation, or was conjectured from the seeming knowledge of such a life shown in the "Adventures of a Strolling Player," printed in the British Magazine, where the scene is placed in Kent; or from the conclusion of the story of George Primrose. It is however true that he was afterwards known to express desire to play as a piece of admirable low comedy, the character of Scrub in "The Beaux Stratagem."

As far as can be ascertained, after reaching London his first determination seems to have been to turn his classical knowledge to account as usher in a school. With this view he made application to one of those establishments under a feigned name; ashamed, as it appears, of an occupation from which he soon hoped to escape and which by this device might never be known. A reference as to character was however required, and knowing none in England to whom to apply, he gave the name of the gentleman already mentioned, Dr. Radcliff of Dublin; but at the same time wrote to that gentleman himself, requesting him to give *no* answer to the inquiry of the schoolmaster. The reason of this we may readily conceive: having given a wrong name at first, expecting to be received without reference, he could not without hazard of total rejection afterwards acknowledge the deception; he sought besides, merely temporary shelter, which was probably afforded until the answer from Dublin should arrive, trusting in the mean time that his attainments and moral conduct would establish their own character; while as it was obvious that Doctor Radcliff could not recommend a ficti-

* St. James's Chronicle, April 12—14, 1774.

tious person, no answer from him was better than direct denial of all knowledge of the applicant.

This story was told soon after the death of the Poet, by a writer of credit from a then living authority. In the statements mingled with it however several errors crept in, in consequence of few authentic particulars of the Poet's life being then (1776) known; thus the real place of his birth is thought to be Roscommon; and he is believed to have lived in England previous to visiting the Continent: while the interval between the two applications to Dr. Radcliff, instead of being passed in travelling, as this writer thinks, were really spent in London; that is between 1756, when seeking the ushership, and 1758, when he wrote again to that gentleman, soliciting aid in procuring subscriptions for one of his forthcoming works. That his adventures as related by him to that gentleman were, as is here said, amusing, we may readily believe: situated as he was while on the Continent, they must from any pen have possessed no ordinary interest; and from his own, ever abundant in humour and ease, no doubt a peculiar charm. Nor from a correspondent, to whom he stood partly in the relation of pupil, and who had known his previous struggles in Dublin, would he probably conceal much which it might not be necessary to disclose to others.

"This country," (Roscommon,) writes the Rev. Dr. Thomas Campbell, whose connexion with Bishop Percy in drawing up a memoir of the Poet has been mentioned, "boasts of a still greater honour, the birth of the much-lamented Oliver Goldsmith. I have learned a very curious anecdote of this extraordinary man, from the widow of a Dr. Radcliff, who had been his tutor in Trinity College, Dublin. She mentioned to me a very long letter from him, which she had often heard her husband read to his friends upon the commencement of Goldsmith's celebrity. But this, with other things of more value, was unfortunately lost by an accidental fire since her husband's death. It appears that the beginning of his career was one continued struggle against adversity. Upon his first going to England, he was in such distress, that he would have gladly become an usher to a country school; but so destitute was he of friends to recommend him, that he could not without difficulty obtain even this low department. The master of the school scrupled to employ him without some testimonial of his past life. Goldsmith referred him to his tutor at college for a character; but all this while he went under a feigned name. From this resource, therefore, one would think that little in his favour could be ever hoped for. But he only wanted to serve a present exigency;—an ushership was not his object.

"In this strait, he wrote a letter to Dr. Radcliff, imploring him, as he tendered the welfare of an old pupil, not to answer a letter which he would probably receive the same post with his own from the schoolmaster. He added that he had good reasons for concealing both from him and the rest of the world his name, and the real state of his case; every circumstance of which he promised to communicate upon some future occasion. His tutor, embarrassed

enough to know what answer he should give, resolved at last to give none. And thus was poor Goldsmith snatched from between the horns of his present dilemma, and suffered to drag on a miserable life for a few probationary months. It was not till after his return from his rambles over great part of the world, and after having got some footing on this slippery globe, that he at length wrote to Dr. Radcliff to thank him for not answering the schoolmaster's letter, and to fulfil his promise of giving him a history of the whole transaction. It contained a comical narrative of his adventures from leaving Ireland to that time. His musical talents had procured him a welcome reception wherever he went. My authority says that her husband admired this letter more than any part of his works. But she would not venture to trust her memory in detailing particulars, which, after all, could not be so interesting but from his own manner of stating them.*

The situation of the school where he obtained temporary relief from absolute want, is not remembered: by some it was said to be Yorkshire, probably from his familiar acquaintance with parts of that county evinced in conversation; from other circumstances there is more reason to believe it Kent, and in the neighbourhood of Tenterden or Ashford, the journey to which from London would be also more within the reach of his finances. How long he continued is likewise unknown. The silence of Dr. Radcliff no doubt augured ill in the eyes of his employer; and very simple perhaps rather homely manners, a distressed condition, and rugged appearance, were little calculated to remove any unfavourable impression. The consideration shown him in the school under such circumstances was not likely to be great: his pride, seconded by disgust at the occupation, probably took the alarm; and he was soon therefore again in London, equally friendless and distressed as before, but with a recollection of the miseries of his employment that breaks out in various parts of his writings, and the application of which to his personal peculiarities, is immediately obvious in the supposed treatment of an usher:—

“The truth is, in spite of all their labours to please, they are generally the laughing stock of the school. Every trick is played upon the usher; *the oddity of his manners, his dress, or his language, are a fund of eternal ridicule*; the master himself now and then cannot avoid joining in the laugh, and the poor wretch, eternally resenting this ill usage, seems to live in a state of warfare with all the family.”†—“After all the fatigues of the day,” he was in the habit of saying on other occasions, “the poor usher of an academy is obliged to sleep in the same bed with a Frenchman, a teacher of that language to the boys; who disturbs him every night an hour, perhaps, in papering and filleting his hair, and stinks worse than a carrion, with his rancid pomatums when he lays his head beside him on the bolster.”

* “Historical Survey of the South of Ireland.” 8vo. Lond. 1777, pp. 286—289.

† Works, vol. i. Bee, No. VI. Essay on Education.

"Upon my arrival in town, sir," we are again told in the novel, "my first care was to deliver your letter of recommendation to our cousin, who was himself in little better circumstances than I. My first scheme, you know, sir, was to be usher at an academy, and I asked his advice on the affair. Our cousin received the proposal with a true sardonic grin. 'Ay,' cried he, 'this is indeed a very pretty career that has been chalked out for you. I have been an usher at a boarding school myself; and may I die by an anodyne necklace, but I had rather be under-turnkey in Newgate. *I was up early and late: I was browbeat by the master, hated for my ugly face by the mistress, worried by the boys within,* and never permitted to stir out to receive civility abroad. But are you sure you are fit for a school? Let me examine you a little. Have you been bred apprentice to the business?' 'No.' 'Then you won't do for a school. Can you dress the boys' hair?' 'No.' 'Then you won't do for a school. Have you had the smallpox?' 'No.' 'Then you won't do for a school. Can you lie three in a bed?' 'No.' 'Then you will never do for a school. Have you got a good stomach?' 'Yes.' 'Then you will by no means do for a school.'"

His dependence now for a livelihood rested on such professional acquirements as circumstances had best enabled him to make. Application was therefore made to several apothecaries for the situation of assistant, but the same obstacles that operated against him at the academy prevented his reception here. Ultimately a chemist, said to have been named Jacob, and residing at the corner of Monument or Bell Yard, on Fish Street Hill, taking compassion on his destitute condition, and pleased with the degree of chemical science he displayed, admitted him into his establishment.* Here he remained only a few months. Hearing that Dr. Sleigh was in London, he called to renew his acquaintance, and was received with every demonstration of regard, or, in the words put into his mouth by a gentleman† who knew him for several years, he is said to have described their interview in the following manner:—"But notwithstanding it was Sunday, and it is to be supposed in my best clothes, Sleigh scarcely knew me—such is the tax the unfortunate pay to poverty. However, when he did recollect me, I found his heart as warm as ever, and he shared his purse and friendship with me during his continuance in London."

At this time it appears he had not acquainted his friends in Ireland with his situation, a previous application to that quarter for pecuniary aid having failed; rather from want of the means, as it would seem, than diminution of their regard. His distress before being engaged by the chemist, was therefore no doubt extreme, and such as with all his buoyancy of spirit, to have produced the most gloomy reflections. In a subsequent letter to Mr. Hodson it will be seen he

* The late Richard Sharp, Esq. remembered to have had the house pointed out to him, as he informed the writer, in early life, with an anecdote or two of the poet which he had since forgotten.

† Mr. William Cooke, the barrister; author of an Essay on the "Dramatic Art," and "Conversation," a poem.

states his difficulties in being "left without friends, recommendations, money or impudence," and claims some merit for not having had recourse to the "friar's cord or the suicide's halter." If he was ever reduced in England to mingle with the lowest description of society, it was probably at this time; for a late writer* asserts, on the authority as he says of the late Mr. George Langton, that Goldsmith to the surprise of a circle of good company, once began a story in these words; "When I lived among the beggars of Axe Lane." In this there may be some mistake or exaggeration; the unguarded nature of the man may have let fall expressions implying acquaintance with the habits of such persons, but not probably in the exact terms here put into his mouth.

By the friendship of Dr. Sleigh and a few other acquaintance found in London, he was enabled to establish himself as physician, in an humble way, in Bankside, Southwark. Humility of appearance is not very favourable to success in physic: his poorer neighbours indeed found him useful; but the rich, who could alone contribute to his support, usually expect some external display of wealth as one of the evidences of successful practice in the candidate for their confidence, because they rarely know any thing of his qualifications. His address likewise wanted that polish, while his honesty and candour despised that intrigue, which some of his brethren find convenient substitutes for talents. He had leisure however to turn his attention to literature, which formed, there is reason, to believe a more favourite pursuit; and it possessed this advantage over his profession, that the exertion of industry and talent were sure of procuring at least some return, while in the former they could *command* none. The assistance received from Sleigh, who though kind had little to spare, could not be considerable, and when he left London it necessarily ceased. Goldsmith was therefore thrown upon such resources as his ingenuity could supply.

It was about this period he became acquainted with Richardson, the celebrated novelist: how, it does not clearly appear; but Dr. Kippis who knew him early in London, mentioned having a vague impression on his mind that Goldsmith while in practice had been professionally attentive to one of the men employed in Richardson's printing office, who lived in his vicinity, and that this accidental occurrence led to further intercourse. Such an acquaintance, at once an admired author and an eminent printer, promised to be advantageous to a young writer making his first start into literature, and the opportunity we may believe was not neglected. That he was ever received into the family of the latter on a footing of particular intimacy is doubtful: the physician was then unknown and poor; the printer at the summit of reputation, and competently rich; and as there seems no reason to doubt that in the intervals of professional employment the former acted occasionally in his establishment as corrector of the press, a fact known also to Boswell though he does not state to whom, we may believe that he shared the hospitality and

† Best's Personal Recollections, p. 76.

society of his employer. It was likewise through this channel, and about this time, that he became known to Dr. Young, author of the "Night Thoughts;" an honour of which he was afterwards accustomed, and justly, to boast.

His connexion with Richardson which has been questioned, seems nevertheless to be confirmed by an interview nearly at the same time with his Edinburgh friend Dr. Farr, who related their meeting in the following terms:—

"From the time of Goldsmith's leaving Edinburgh in the year 1754, I never saw him till the year 1756, when I was in London attending the hospitals and lectures. Early in January* he called upon me one morning before I was up, and on my entering the room, I recognised my old acquaintance, dressed in a rusty full-trimmed black suit, with his pockets full of papers, which instantly reminded me of the poet in Garrick's farce of 'Lethe.' After we had finished our breakfast, he drew from his pocket a part of a tragedy, which he said he had brought for my correction; in vain I pleaded inability, when he began to read, and every part on which I expressed a doubt as to the propriety was immediately blotted out. I then more earnestly entreated him not to trust to my judgment, but to the opinion of persons better qualified to decide on dramatic compositions; on which he told me he had submitted his production, so far as he had written, to Mr. Richardson, the author of 'Clarissa,' on which I peremptorily declined offering another criticism upon the performance.

"The name and subject of the tragedy have unfortunately escaped my memory; neither do I recollect with exactness how much he had written, though I am inclined to believe that he had not completed the third act: I never heard whether he afterwards finished it. In this visit, I remember his relating a strange Quixotic scheme he had in contemplation, of going to decipher the inscriptions on the *written mountains*, though he was altogether ignorant of Arabic, or the language in which they might be supposed to be written. The salary of 300*l.* per annum, which had been left for the purpose, was the temptation."

No trace of this production remains, or seems to have been known to his literary friends; the probability therefore is, that being unsatisfactory to himself or to such as he thought proper to consult, it was destroyed: but the anecdote is characteristic of the same docility to criticism he ever displayed. An author is almost necessarily self-willed; what costs him some labour to execute, he is naturally willing to preserve; and the art to blot, though a necessary, is often a painful operation; neither can he be sure, unless the literary authority be high, that the judgment which simply corrects is superior to that which conceives and constructs; and when a man of undoubted genius submits to it, we have proofs at least of praiseworthy modesty.

The anecdote is likewise worthy of notice as furnishing another

* It is likely there is some mistake here; the period must have been later in the spring, or it is possible the year may have been 1757.

instance of the frequent practice of young poets to start in the race for public applause with a tragedy; adventuring thus in their literary nonage upon an effort which experience and the most cultivated powers only can hope to render worthy of general approbation. An opinion indeed has gone forth and obtained extensive, almost universal, assent, that it is easier for a young author to write a good tragedy than a good comedy. Yet judging from previous examples, what is the fact? The most popular comedies on the English stage, those of Congreve, Farquhar, and Sheridan, were written when their authors were comparatively young men; while on the other hand there is scarcely an instance, perhaps indeed not one, of a tragedy written by an inexperienced writer, keeping possession of the stage or even exciting any high degree of admiration in the closet.

An acquaintance from Ireland already familiar to the reader, also recognised the Poet in the metropolis in the same year. "My father," writes the Rev. Thomas Beatty, Rector of Moira in Ireland, in a communication on this subject, "met Goldsmith in London during a visit to that capital, about the year 1756. He was dressed according to the fashion of the day, in a suit of green and gold, but old and tarnished; and his shirt and neckcloth appeared to have been worn at least a fortnight. He said he was practising physick, and doing very well."

A ludicrous story told of him at this period afterwards reached the ears of Sir Joshua Reynolds, who repeated it to one of their mutual friends, a lady, who, to the delight of one of her acquaintance, can still detail the anecdote and through whom it is with much more information, communicated to the reader. In conformity to the prevailing garb of the day for physicians, Goldsmith, unable probably to obtain a new, had procured a second-hand velvet coat; but either from being deceived in the bargain or by the subsequent accident, a considerable breach in the left breast was obliged to be repaired by the introduction of a new piece. This had not been so neatly done, as not to be apparent to the close observation of his acquaintance, and such persons as he visited in the capacity of medical attendant: willing, therefore, to conceal what is considered too obvious a symptom of poverty, he was accustomed to place his hat over the patch, and retain it there carefully during the visit; but this constant position becoming noticed, and the cause being soon known, occasioned no little merriment at his expense.

While struggling for an existence which we may well believe precarious, he found amusement in the society of such former fellow students in Edinburgh as accident threw in his way, some of whom, like himself, were seeking an establishment in London. Among others was the son of Dr. John Milner, a dissenting minister, who kept a classical school of eminence at Peckham, in Surrey. Satisfied of his fitness for the situation, and desirous of advancing the interests of his family, as well as of relieving what he soon perceived to be the destitute condition of his friend, this gentleman proposed to Goldsmith to officiate for a time in charge of the establishment of his father, then suffering under severe illness. The

proposition was accepted: it ensured until something better should offer, at least security from starvation, "for all his ambition," as he says on another occasion, "was now to live;" while the circumstances under which it was offered, promised a considerate attention to his comforts and feelings, of which on a previous occasion he had found the want.

His removal thither, supposed by Bishop Percy to have taken place in 1758, really occurred toward the end of 1756, or the beginning of the following year. Miss Milner, daughter of his employer, asserted so lately as the beginning of the present century, that he continued about three years in their house: this we know from the evidence of his own letters to be in part erroneous, excepting we believe, what is not unlikely to have occurred from the illness of Milner being of a fluctuated and protracted nature, that his residence was rather occasional than constant. She likewise said he came to them from Richardson, with whom he had some, she knew not what, connexion, and of whom he spoke in terms of regard. By the verbal account of Mrs Hodson to Mr. Handcock, the first letter of her brother to her relatives after quitting the Continent was written from this school.

All that is distinctly remembered of him here may be comprised within a short detail. He was considered to be, according to Miss Milner, what he scoffingly alludes to in his writings as one of his own negative qualifications, *very good-natured*; played tricks somewhat familiar, and occasionally a little coarse, upon the servants and boys; told very entertaining stories; and found frequent amusement in his flute. With the scholars he was a favourite, being ever ready to indulge them in certain, not very expensive indeed, school-boy dainties, whenever his pecuniary means permitted; and he was not over strict in that discipline which, however necessary to observe, a man of amiable disposition occasionally feels reluctant to enforce. His benevolent feelings appeared always active; mendicants rarely quitted him without relief; and a tale of distress roused all his sympathies. His small supplies were thus exhausted frequently before the stated salary became due, when Mrs. Milner would say to him with a smile, upon application for an advance,—“You had better, Mr. Goldsmith, let me take care of your money, as I do for some of the young gentlemen;” to which he would reply, in the same spirit of good humour, “In truth, madam, there is equal need.”

One of the pupils particularly noticed by him for possessing promising talents, and who ever after felt a strong regard for his tutor, was the late Samuel Bishop, Esq. of London,* in whose family a few traditional notices of his peculiarities are still remembered. Always sociable and ready to join in whatever was going forward, his good-nature led him to mingle in the sports of the boys, and submit to their wit or even to their reproof for occasional want

* Father of the Rev. W. Bishop, Rector of Upton, Berkshire; Rev. H. Bishop; and Dr. Bishop, of Oxford.

of dexterity. In such a rude community, however, familiarity has its disadvantages by the opening it affords to youthful insubordination or impertinence, an instance of which is recorded. When amusing his younger companions during play hours with the flute, and expatiating on the pleasures derived from music, in addition to its advantages in society as a gentlemanlike acquirement, a pert boy, looking at his situation and personal disadvantages with something of contempt, rudely replied to the effect that *he* surely could not consider himself a gentleman; an offence which, though followed by instant chastisement, disconcerted and pained him extremely.

Of that simplicity or absence of mind so well known as one of his characteristics, Mr. Bishop mentioned an amusing instance when they met several years afterwards in the streets of London; for which and the preceding anecdote the writer is indebted to his son, the Rev. H. Bishop, Chaplain to the Archbishop of Dublin:—

“After an interval of some years, my father, while walking in London with my mother, to whom he was just married, met Goldsmith, and addressing him, an immediate recognition took place. The tutor was delighted to see his former pupil, and expressed great pleasure at the introduction to his wife. Still the associations in his mind of their former school connexion was too strong to be overcome. ‘Come, my boy,’ said he, addressing my father by his Christian name, ‘I am delighted to see you; I must treat you to something; what shall it be? will you have some apples?’ and immediately turned to the display of fruit furnished by a basket woman who stood near.

“In the course of conversation, he mentioned his picture by Sir Joshua Reynolds, which had been recently engraved; and immediately added, ‘Have you seen it, Sam? Have you got an engraving?’ My father, not to appear negligent of the rising fame of his old preceptor, replied, that he had not yet procured it; he was just furnishing his house, but had fixed upon the spot the print was to occupy as soon as he was ready to receive it. ‘Sam,’ he said, with some emotion, ‘if your picture had been published, I should not have suffered an hour to elapse without procuring it.’ After some further conversation, the sense of this seeming neglect was appeased by apologies. He promised to visit the young couple as soon as they should be settled; but this promise, I believe, was never fulfilled.”

At the table of Dr. Milner, he became acquainted with Mr. (afterwards Doctor) Griffiths, then a bookseller in Paternoster-row, and projector and proprietor of the *Monthly Review*. Literary topics were, as may be supposed from Mr. Milner also being an occasional writer, frequently discussed, in which Goldsmith took part, and proved himself so well qualified to decide upon subjects of general literature, his previous tastes and pursuits being also known, that after a few specimens of criticism furnished from Peckham, he was engaged as a regular writer in the *Review*. The terms were, his board and lodging in the house of the bookseller, with an adequate

salary; the engagement, which appears to have commenced in April, 1757, to continue for a year.

A shorter period sufficed for the inclinations of both; at the end of five months, it was dissolved by mutual consent; Goldsmith being tired of his employer or employment, and Griffiths of an inmate less industrious or submissive than probably he had been induced to expect. The drudgery of the occupation, not less irksome than that of the school, required in fact with almost as much restraint upon his time, more unremitting labour of body and mind. Writing, though one of the most delightful of amusements, is the most laborious of trades. To sit down daily to furnish the stated number of pages for a periodical journal,—to work, whether disposed or not, whether suffering under a diseased body or jaded mind,—to rack invention and memory in order to furnish the expected amount of information to the reader, the customary supplies of wisdom and wit, of research, judgment, and taste—can be no easy or enviable employment. Between a methodical man like the bookseller, and a man without method like the critic, there was not likely to be much community of feeling. They therefore parted; but however dissatisfied with each other, as was afterwards sufficiently obvious, not as it would seem, in open hostility at the moment.

Goldsmith declared that he wrote daily from nine o'clock till two, and often, as he sometimes added, during the whole of the day; that he experienced little personal consideration at the hands of his employer, and few comforts from the arrangements of his wife; and that the latter, as well as the former, interfered with the articles written for the Review, in a manner that made the labour greater or less agreeable; that desirous to impart more elegance to such as he wrote, their taste or necessities required at his hands quantity more than quality; and that his employer wished to assume the patron or master more than he thought becoming, or would permit from one in all respects his inferior.

In the course of the inquiries necessary for this work, it became known to the writer that the least probable of these statements was nevertheless correct, namely, that the publisher and *his wife* both interfered in altering the articles written for the Review; the fact, it appears by the following extract of a letter, was previously known to others, avowed guardians of his fame.

“Having mentioned Griffiths,” writes Dr. Campbell to Bishop Percy (June 30th, 1790,) “I will confess to you that the circumstance of him and his wife (I mean their altering and interpolating Goldsmith’s criticisms on books for the Review,) puzzles me. It is one of the most valuable anecdotes before me, and my conscience bids me report it; but my fears whisper to me that all the Reviews will abuse me for so doing. But who’s afraid?” The courage assumed in the last sentence was not exhibited; for neither he nor the Bishop alluded to so curious an incident. Griffiths was then and long afterwards alive; and it furnishes a curious example of moral pusillanimity on the one hand, or the extent of literary tyranny on the other, that an important fact in the biography of a distinguish-

ed writer, tending to his vindication on a particular point, should be suppressed by a writer of his memoirs from the dread of offending Reviews.*

Griffiths, who by the account of one of his connexions to the writer, "was a man of strong, shrewd, good sense, but not of much refinement or cultivation," may have been unable to understand the sensitive feelings of his dependent, or have found some cause of complaint either in his want of diligence or of regular habits, neither of which necessarily impeached the rectitude of his general conduct. Where the exact portion of labour cannot be defined, there will frequently be misunderstanding between the employer and the employed; and the habits of men may border on irregularity without being morally wrong. Thus, Dr. Johnson, as we know, permitted peculiarities to grow upon him which occasioned inconvenience to those with whom he became an inmate; and Goldsmith may have given way to similar infirmities, scarcely conscious they formed cause of serious offence. Studious men, even of the highest order, occasionally make late hours the favourite period of relaxation; but in that class among whom he was now thrown, consisting chiefly of the secondary sort,—condemned too often to a life of shifts and expedients, and who diverge more widely from the rules of strict prudence the more uncertain their means of subsistence become,—he found little else. The temptation to join them was therefore sometimes unavoidable. "You cannot," he says to his brother-in-law soon afterwards, "expect regularity in one who is regular in nothing. Nay, were I to love you by rule, I dare venture to say I could never do it sincerely. Take me then with all my faults."

His connexion with the Review being known to various friends, an opinion prevailed among them, on hearing him complain of the unfavourable spirit evinced towards his writings at a subsequent time in that work, that he had been formerly its Editor or chief conductor. This was also stated after his death, but denied in that journal. The contradiction appears in noticing a short memoir of him published on that occasion, while his general services as a coadjutor in criticism are admitted:—"Whether the Doctor's biographer and warm panegyrist, who professes to write from personal knowledge, is right or wrong in his account of our poet's adventures in his travels abroad, we know not; but we are authorized to say that he is much mistaken in his assertion, that Dr. Goldsmith was once employed to *superintend* the Monthly Review. The Doctor had his merit as a man of letters; but, alas! those that knew him

* In the skirmishing that occurred between the rival Reviews for some years after the establishment of the Critical Review, allusions occur to this fact:—"The Critical Review is not written by a parcel of obscure hirelings, under the restraint of a bookseller and his wife, who presume to revise, alter, and amend the articles occasionally." "The principal writers in the Critical Review are unconnected with booksellers, unawed by old women, and independent of each other." Griffiths is repeatedly called "an illiterate bookseller." (Crit. Rev. Feb. 1759.) In the following month, in the article on Rowe's Fluxions, there is another reference, either meant for Griffiths or his wife, to "a certain antiquated female critic of the Monthly Review."

must smile at the idea of such a superintendent of a concern which most obviously required some degree of prudence, as well as a competent acquaintance with the world. It is, however, true that he had for a while a seat at our board; and that, so far as his knowledge of books extended, he was not an unuseful assistant.”*

The articles which came from his pen in that work, and the precise period when they were furnished, have been hitherto unknown; neither he nor Griffiths being very communicative on the subject in conversation. But the latter has left this information on record behind him: his own copy of the work, now in the possession of a gentleman with the largest and rarest private collection in the kingdom, contains the necessary references; and by the intervention of a friend,† to whom literature and antiquities are under various obligations, the writer is indebted for the opportunity of making known what is a fair object of literary curiosity.

To each article in the Review its proprietor, in the copy kept for private use, affixed the initial letter of the name of the contributor; and where two began with the same, one or more other letters, so as to guide those acquainted with the literary history of the day to a pretty accurate conclusion. The list of his coadjutors, in 1757, is not deficient in weight or talent. Thus, R—— was Dr. Rose, of Chiswick (connected with Griffiths by their marrying sisters,) who chiefly took the theological department; R——d, Owen Ruffhead, that on law and constitutional history; Ra——, Ralph, the well-known political writer; Sh——, Dr. Gregory Sharpe; La——, probably Langhorne, the poet; K——s, K——pp——s, and perhaps K. (for Griffiths is not regular in the letters used,) Dr. Kippis; Cl——d, probably Cleveland, Ok——, Okey; G——r, Grainger, the poet; beside others with the letters L.; W.; B.; B——t; G.; D.; less certainly ascertained. Kenrick immediately succeeded to Goldsmith's place in the Review. His articles, noted K—n—k, are very numerous.

There are three writers whose names begin with the letter G. Where standing singly, it is believed to designate the contributions of Griffiths himself, consisting chiefly of extracts from books of general knowledge, with little attempt at original remark, to which even if not young in the business of reviewing, his business necessarily precluded much attention. These articles are long, the subjects easy; and at a time when the Review was not very profitable, we may believe he was not disposed to pay another for doing what filled up so much space with so little labour to himself, or as we are told, to his wife.‡ The contributions of Grainger are marked G——r, or Gr——r. Those of Goldsmith vary more in the letters employed, from being written at different times, as the hurry or

* Monthly Review, August, 1774.—Notice of the Life of Dr. Oliver Goldsmith.

† Thomas Amyot, Esq. Treasurer of the Antiquarian Society, F. R. S. The possessor of the work was the late Mr. Heber, whose liberality in opening all his literary stores to such as were in want of them, must be remembered with honour.

‡ As a specimen, see the notice of “Smith's History of the County of Kerry,” December, 1757.

whim of the moment dictated, without uniformly referring to the previous marks affixed to each. Thus we have Gold—, Golds—h, G—s—th, G—sm—, G—ds—, G—th, Go—th, Go—h; and the correctness of these notations are sufficiently verified by internal evidence.

The first article to which his name is annexed appears in April, 1757, among the short notices of small and temporary publications of the Monthly Catalogue, in characterizing a political squib, "The Rival Politicians; or the Fox Triumphant: a fable betwixt a Lion, a Wolf, and a Fox." The criticism, if not very elegant or witty, is at least short, and may be quoted as an instance of homely beginning in this department of literature: the letters appended to it by Griffiths are "Gold—." "Were this piece strung up against a dead wall, it might catch the passing 'prentice hugely; but then we would advise a title somewhat better adapted to its merits, as well as its situation; as thus,—'The Triumphant Fox's Garland; plainly declaring how the Wolf was most falsely flayed alive before his own face,'" &c. &c.

A more important paper of his in the same month is an analysis of "Remains of the Mythology and Poetry of the Celtes," by Professor Mallet, of Copenhagen; a subject in which Goldsmith took considerable interest from what he had heard or remembered of Celtic stories and superstitions in Ireland, and on which he is believed to have written essays at a subsequent time in other periodical publications. It formed the third of a series lately commenced in the Review, "The Foreign Article;" and is plainly designated by the word Golds—h. A preliminary printed note, however, introduces it thus:—"The following paper was sent us by the gentleman who signs D., and who we hope will excuse our striking out a few paragraphs for the sake of brevity." On referring to the previous foreign articles signed as here stated, they are marked G—r, meaning Grainger. A discrepancy, therefore, exists between the private mark of the proprietor and the printed memorandum, in which the former no doubt is correct; the latter an error of the person who superintended the press, and who was unacquainted with the new contributor.

In May we have his reviews of "Douglas, a Tragedy," which is characterized in the same terms always used, as "not rising above mediocrity," and "The Connoisseur," which is praised; also two in the foreign article,—“Specimens of such Plants as are most curious in Piedmont;” and “Literary News,” dated from Padua; so that his time in Italy, judging from these specimens of remark and information, was not unemployed. These are succeeded by no less than twenty-three notices of minor works in the Monthly Catalogue, all bearing his name; and this busy month concludes with a review of Burke's Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful,—a clever analysis, occupying eight pages, and showing the critic to be a dexterous and ready workman. Whether he knew the author personally at this time is doubtful; that he may have been informed of his name, and remembered him as a college contemporary, is probable. The re-

marks are couched in a spirit of courtesy, and probably of real admiration, though not of indiscriminate assent to his positions; while the conclusion offers something like an apology for differing in opinion with so tasteful and pleasing a writer. This amicable meeting as reviewer and reviewed, may have been the precursor of their personal friendship. Burke, as was said afterwards, repaid the obligation in kind.

The June number supplies notices of "Smith's History of New York,"—"The Military Operations in North America,"—"Saxe's Memoirs on the Art of War,"—"Smollett's History of England," in which he regrets the want of "manly and sensible observations, which the writer was so well able to give," but praises his style as "clear, nervous, and flowing,"—and the "Foreign Article." Nine of his notices appear in the monthly catalogue; others which have no letters affixed may own the same origin. The account of "Keyser's Travels," in the appendix to the half-yearly volume, comes likewise from his pen.

In July appear "Layard on the Contagion among the Cattle,"—"Translation of Cardinal de Polignac's Anti-Lucetius,"—"Hanway's Eight Days' Journey from Portsmouth to Kingston-upon-Thames." Most readers of literary history remember how sharply Dr. Johnson animadverted on this work, especially on the traveller's injudicious and singular hostility to the use of tea; the sneering tone of which criticism in the second part was never forgiven by that otherwise amiable man, though even then he was known to be wrong and Johnson right. Similar belief—and the coincidence may be noticed—is expressed by Goldsmith, in the harmless effects of that temperate beverage; and as he did not then know Johnson, he is not to be considered as influenced by his decision. The criticism concludes with the following just and sensible remarks:—"Yet after all, why so violent an outcry against this devoted article of modern luxury? Every nation that is rich hath had, and will have, its favourite luxuries. Abridge the people in one, they generally run into another; and the reader may judge which will be most conducive to either mental or bodily health,—the watery beverage of a modern fine lady; or the strong beer, and stronger waters, of her great-grandmother." In the monthly catalogue four of his notices are marked; "Memoirs of Madame Maintenon,"—"The Mother-in-law, or Innocent Sufferer,"—"The Fair Citizen,"—"Buchanan's New English Dictionary."

In August, his contributions were, on "Rabener's Satirical Letters,"—"Letters from an Armenian in Ireland to his Friends at Trebisond,"—Letter (his own), of eleven pages, to the authors of the Monthly Review on "Voltaire's Universal History,"—"The Contest in America between Great Britain and France."

September contains only two papers—on the "Epigoniad" of Wilkie, and "Odes of Gray." In the former, only two introductory pages of criticism are noted as his; the remainder, consisting chiefly of quotations, remarks on defective verses, repetitions of the same rhyme, and other faults of the poem, has simply the letter G. affixed,

implying, as there seems no doubt, that they were the works of Griffiths himself.

Here, for the present, his labours in the service of that journal ceased. He could not, however, desert literature, although, as we shall see, displeased with criticism; and we find him, by a letter written to Mr. Hodson about two months afterwards, conjoining his two professions for a livelihood. "By a very little practice as a physician, and a very little reputation as a poet, I make a shift to live." Poet was then frequently used as the generic name for author; and his pieces were probably of that miscellaneous nature which, produced on an emergency for periodical works, seldom survive the occasion: it is certain he did not himself think fit to bring into renewed existence what at this period came from his pen. Still, as he wrote much, we are anxious to trace on what topics he was occupied; and would rather be permitted to judge of their merits for ourselves whether we can afford to lose any thing of such a writer. Dr. Kippis, who wrote in the Review and knew him, was impressed by some faint recollection of his having made translations from the French; among others, of a tale of Voltaire; but the name and date were forgotten. He was however gradually making his way, laying the foundation of his fame, and acquiring the rapidity necessary to an author by profession, in aid of that elegance, that "grace beyond the reach of art," bestowed only by nature upon her favourites, and in itself no indifferent evidence of genius.

There are reasons for believing that one of the original pieces from his pen at this time was an enlargement of the paper on the merits of the English poets, said to have been first drawn up in Ireland at the desire of Mr. Contarine. It is called a "Poetical Scale;" and is an estimate, arranged in columns, with a variety of remarks subjoined, on the relative ranks held by the greater English poets in the requisites of genius, judgment, learning, and versification. The point of perfection in each is supposed to be twenty degrees, of which nineteen only have been attained by any of our writers. Thus Shakspeare is estimated to be, as in genius 19, judgment 14, learning 14, versification 19; Milton, in genius 18, judgment 16, learning 17, versification 18; Dryden, in genius 18, judgment 16, learning 17, versification 18; Pope, in genius 18, judgment 18, learning 15, versification 18: an arrangement of their respective powers obviously fanciful and imperfect, but conveying sufficiently the opinions of the writer. The idea is of older date.

This paper appeared in January 1758, in the Literary Magazine; a publication commenced by Mr. John Newbery in May 1756, and which Dr. Johnson superintended or contributed to for fifteen months, discontinuing his assistance about September 1757, nearly at the same moment that Goldsmith quitted the Review. The spirit of the article, and the severity of the remarks made upon Milton in comparing him with Shakspeare,* led a writer some years afterwards,

* "The faults of Shakspeare were those of genius, those of Milton of the man of genius. The former arises from imagination getting the better of judgment; the latter from habit getting the better of imagination. Shakspeare's faults were those

who knew of his participation in that work, to attribute them to Dr. Johnson. "Mr. Nichols," says Mr. Murphy, whose attachment to his illustrious friend was unwearied, "showed him in 1780 a book called 'Remarks on Johnson's Life of Milton,' in which the affair of Lawder was renewed with virulence; and a poetical scale in the Literary Magazine 1758, (when Johnson had ceased to write in that collection was urged as an additional proof of deliberate malice. He read the libellous passage with attention, and instantly wrote on the margin—'In the business of Lawder I was deceived; partly by thinking the man too frantic to be fraudulent. Of the *poetical scale* quoted from the Magazine I am not the author. I fancy it was put in after I had quitted that work; for I not only did not write it, but I do not remember it.'"^{*}

As a matter of literary curiosity it may not be uninteresting to state the reasons why this paper is attributed to Goldsmith, although no certain evidence of the matter is known to exist or is likely now to be obtained.

These are, the use of a scale in reference to the merits of authors on another occasion, as in the preface to the *Citizen of the World*; similarity of opinion on the merits of our poets with those expressed in his avowed writings; the high standard of poetry assumed in both; the same opinion, incidentally introduced, of the merits of the disputants in the contest between Bentley and Boyle; the same account here as in his edition of Parnell of the origin of two of that poet's pieces; similar political opinions with Dr. Johnson, thence influencing his supposed opinion of Milton; the same preference here of Farquhar over Congreve, Vanbrugh and others, as always maintained by him in conversation and in writing. To these may be added the common evidence of style; the use as in all his essays, of the first person; the fact of his being then unacquainted with Johnson, who as having had connexion with the Magazine, though not then engaged in it, might have known the writer, through the proprietor; the probability of its being his first introduction to Newbery, by whom he was afterwards so much employed; the general recollection of Mrs. Lawder that he had early drawn up some such essay; and the belief that he contributed more than one paper to this Magazine. Thus in February 1758, commences a paper, with traces of his manner, though not decisive in their nature, on the English Language, which are continued till May; from the latter is taken the article on the "Augustan

of a great poet; those of Milton of a little pedant. When Shakspeare is execrable, he is so exquisitely so that he is as inimitable in his blemishes as in his beauties. The puns of Milton betray a narrowness of education and a degeneracy of habit. His theological quibbles and perplexed speculations are daily equalled and excelled by the most abject enthusiasts; and if we consider him as a prose writer, he has neither the learning of a scholar nor the manners of a gentleman. There is no force in his reasoning, no elegance in his style, and no taste in his composition. We are therefore to consider him in one fixed point of light,—that of a great poet, with a laudable envy of rivalling and excelling all who attempted sublimity of sentiment and description."—*Literary Mag.* Jan. 1758.

^{*} "Essay on the Life and Genius of Dr. Johnson," p. 50.; prefixed to his Works, 12 vols. 12mo. Lond. 1806.

Age in England," printed in the Bee; and in the same month is another paper of his, also printed in the Bee, "On the Pride and Luxury of the Middling Class of People." The Poetical Scale and the Sequel were afterwards republished in the Ladies' Magazine, when he was connected with it.

His residence being at this time in the vicinity of Salisbury Square, Fleet Street, the Temple Exchange Coffee House, near Temple Bar, became a place of frequent resort. Like Johnson, he was fond of a coffee house and a club; for to men without domestic ties, these are substitutes for society. But this house likewise formed a kind of professional place of call, the custom not having then passed away of physicians resorting to particular coffee houses, where at certain hours of the day they were to be sought and found, rather than at their own residences, when required to visit patients. Here the news of the day, of the profession, and of literature, but more particularly the business of the theatre, which then occupied in public opinion the place now given to the House of Commons, were freely discussed; the behaviour of the manager, the ability of actors, and the merits of new pieces decided upon with something like an authority from which there was no appeal; for physicians and lawyers (the unemployed part no doubt), with the idlers of every description to be found in a great metropolis, formed at this time the most authoritative body of critics. Here likewise, when unwilling to make known very humble lodgings, he in common with others wrote letters and received them,—one of the common resources of genteel poverty; here he relaxed from the drudgery of writing into social intercourse, found others as willing to enjoy the passing moment as himself, and formed or renewed intimacies with his literary brethren.

Among these was Dr. James Grainger, likewise a physician, reviewer, and poet, who having graduated in Edinburgh in 1753, was probably known to him before. He was born about 1721 (not 1728, as commonly stated) of, as he says himself in a letter still in existence, seen by the present writer, "a gentleman's family in Cumberland." Hitherto he has been deemed a native of Scotland, (it may have been so, though of a Cumbrian family) and the place of his birth stated to be Dunse; but a strict search made several years ago by Dr. Anderson, after his first edition of the British Poets, failed in discovering any trace of the name or family in that quarter. After being initiated into medicine in the Scottish metropolis, he served in a medical capacity in Pulteney's regiment of foot in Holland in 1746-7-8; made the tour of Europe after quitting the army; and on becoming graduate in physic, established himself in Bond Court, Walbrook. Imbued with a taste for literature, his pen found employment in adding to the income derived from professional labours. In 1755 appeared his Ode on Solitude, in Dodsley's Collection, possessing merit enough to obtain from Dr. Johnson, whose friendship he had the good fortune to acquire*, the term "noble."

* Boswell alludes to this intimacy in various parts of his work; and the following extracts from Grainger's letters to the Rev. Mr. Percy, now in the possession of W. Shaw Mason, Esq., give a few further particulars:—

In May 1756, he commenced writer in the *Monthly Review* in a criticism on Mason's Odes; and during this and the two following years contributed a variety of articles, chiefly on poetry and the drama, to that journal, relinquishing his connexion with it about May 1758. Now wholly neglectful of physic, in 1757 appeared *Historia Febris Intermittentis annorum 1746-7-8, accedunt monita Syphilica*. In March 1758, he became a member of the London College of Physicians; and in November following published a translation of Tibullus, which meeting with an indifferent reception from the *Critical Review*, was said by Grainger to proceed from the personal pique of Smollett though known to each other, and interchanging civilities. He replied, although said to be a worthy man, in the strain of an enraged and irritable author; this produced a severe rejoinder in the *Review* for February 1759; and on the part of both there was more of personality and vituperation than was becoming, or the occasion demanded.

In the previous autumn he had engaged to travel for four years with a young friend, a Mr. Bourryan, of large West India property, whose studies from an early period had been in part committed to

"March 30, 1757. Mr. Johnson asked for you very kindly Sunday last, as did Miss Williams."—May 30, 1758, in allusion to a translation of Ovid's Heroic Epistles, which Mr. Percy had in part completed, Grainger writes, "Johnson thinks you may get fifty pieces for your work. I shall soon show it to Millar, and let you know his answer."—June 27, 1758, we have the following amusing notice of Johnson's habitual indolence:—"I have several times called on Johnson to pay him part of your subscription (*for his edition of Shakspeare*). I say part, because he never thinks of working if he has a couple of guineas in his pocket; but if you notwithstanding order me, the whole shall be given him at once."—July 20, 1758. "Johnson thinks that some of the Epistles (Ovid's, already alluded to) should be done in the heroic measure, and so do I. As to his Shakspeare, *movet sed non promovet*. I shall feed him occasionally with guineas."—Jan. 22, 1764, alluding to his poem of the Sugar Cane, "Sam Johnson has got the second book, but whether he has yet perused it I know not; perhaps it may lie in his desk untouched till I call for it."—April 6, 1764, adverting to the same work, when the first book had been printed off, "Sam Johnson says he will review it in the *Critical (Review)*. He talks handsomely of you."—August, 1765: "I am perfectly satisfied with the reception the 'Sugar Cane' has met with, and am greatly obliged to you and Mr. Johnson for the generous care you took of it in my absence."

† They are marked at first by Griffiths "Dr. G." His chief Reviews are, besides the first (1756), on "The Converts, an Ode;" "Writings and Genius of Pope;" "Smart's Ode;" "Faker;" "Beauty, an Ode;" Six articles in the *Monthly Catalogue* of the first Half-yearly Appendix; "Telemachus;" "Phillipic Poems;" "Leucothoe;" "Philosophical Transactions" (September and October), in conjunction with another writer, B., who is not known; "Cupid;" "The Cadet;" "Ode to Love;" "Idea of Beauty;" "Tour in France," 1757; "De Choiseul's Method of treating persons bitten by Mad Animals;" "Woodward's Cases in Physic;" "Foreign Books" (February); "Foreign Books" (March); "Loss of the Handkerchief," Heroic-Comic Poem; "Collection Académique;" "Sayer's Translation into Latin of Pope's Universal Prayer;" Newcomb's Versification of Harvey's Contemplations;" "Fleece, a Poem," by Dyer; "Oriental Eclogues;" "Medical Observations and Inquiries;" "Goldoni's Two Italian Comedies;" "Lind on the Means of preserving the health of Seamen;" "Newcomb's Versification of Harvey's Contemplations on a Flower Garden," 1758; "Duncomb's Translation of Horace;" "Massey's Translation of Ovid's Fasti;" "Cydylia, or Miscellaneous Poems;" "Holkham, a Poem;" "Verses to the People of England, by W. Whitehead;" "Ode to the King of Prussia;" "Fancy, an irregular Ode;" "Elegy on a Drum Head;" besides a great number of short notices in the *Monthly Catalogue*.

his charge. The reward for this appropriation of time, was to be an annuity for life of 200*l.* per annum. The resolution to quit London, he writes to Dr. Percy in letters from which this abstract is taken, was not adopted in a hurry; for though "his practice was not exceeded by that of any young physician in London," the proposed term of absence, he believed, would not interfere materially with his views, while it promised to add to the number and respectability of his friends. In April, 1759, he embarked for the island of St. Christopher in the West Indies; quarrelled soon after reaching it, as is said, with his patron; commenced practising physician; and married a lady of good family but small fortune, some of whose friends fancied the union not to her advantage. A grossly defamatory and untrue account of the lady appeared during her life, in a memoir of her husband, inserted in the *Westminster Magazine* for 1773, which the exertions of Mr. Percy and others, who knew her and her friends, caused to be contradicted by the threat of legal proceedings. Her affection for his memory was apparently strong; and his letters already mentioned speak of her in terms of similar regard. In the autumn of 1763, he returned to England. The poem of the *Sugar Cane*, written during his abode in the West Indies, had been previously transmitted home, and after some uncertainty as to the mode of publication, did not appear until after he had sailed in May 1764, on his return to St. Christopher's. There, it appears, his affairs had become involved during his absence, which an inheritance derived from the death of a brother in Scotland, enabled him soon after to obviate in part. Unsettled in his plans at this period, as the letters alluded to evince; speculating on the advantages to be derived from removing to other islands less populous and more open to the enterprise of new settlers; anticipating wealth as well from planting as his profession; and the enjoyment, as he says, of many happy days in England when that good should be acquired,—projects conceived with all the warmth of poetry, and overthrown with the usual speed and sternness of matter of fact,—he was taken ill, and died on the 16th December, 1766, in the forty-sixth year of his age.

Grainger possessed considerable learning and genius: his temper, according to Dr. Percy with whom a close friendship had been formed, generous; his habits social; his disposition benevolent, and as Dr. Johnson said, "who would do any good in his power;" his manners simple and unobtrusive in general society, and therefore sometimes overlooked for more loud and commonplace though less gifted and informed talkers. He looked earnestly to the acquisition of fame as a poet; more so than the merits of his pieces warranted; and wishing to rise to literary eminence by this alone, believed he had in some measure secured it, for on first proceeding to the West Indies, he expressed to Mr. Percy the intention of leaving with him, in case of his own death, a corrected copy of his works for publication, with a request that not a line should be permitted to appear which might be thought to derogate from his reputation. His poems however have not had all the success he expected. Attempts to

introduce them to public favour made by some admirers in Scotland have failed,* either from being deficient in true poetical power, or from the subject of the principal piece—the Sugar Cane—possessing little interest for general readers; and so slightly was poetry valued on the spot where the theme was sufficiently familiar, that though advertised for a charitable purpose, no more, as he admits, than twelve subscribers could be obtained in the West India Islands. With its fate in England he was better satisfied, as appears by the extract already given from his letters. It is now seldom read, or—no imperfect test of merit—quoted. Neither has the Ode on Solitude retained firm hold on the public mind.† The neglect is said by some of his countrymen—if indeed he be really a Scotsman—to be unjust; but to what other tribunal than the mass of readers shall we appeal? The version of Tibullus, though not without spirit and tenderness in parts, is deficient as a whole in that felicitous execution which stamps the genuine poet of a high order.

It was through Grainger that the acquaintance of the Rev. Mr. Percy with Goldsmith commenced in the year 1758. The latter alludes to his former friend in the description of fishes in *Animated Nature*, when speaking of such as are poisonous.‡

CHAPTER VII.

Visit of his Brother to London.—Letter to Mr. Hodson.—Memoirs of a Protestant. Grand Magazine.—Letters to Mr. Mills, to Mr. Bryanton, and to Mrs. Jane Lawder.—Appointment to India.—Letter to Mr. Hodson.—Attempts to pass Surgeon's Hall.

HAVING inadvertently mentioned in a letter to Mrs. Lawder, in Ireland, his acquaintance with several names eminent in literature, he was surprised shortly after by the arrival thence of his brother Charles. No previous intimation of the design preceded this visit,—the object of which was, with the characteristic simplicity of a

*An edition of his poems, with a new life prefixed, was undertaken and printed by Dr. Anderson, Editor of the *British Poets*, chiefly at the suggestion of Bishop Percy, by whom many new pieces were supplied; but the work has not been published. A long correspondence on this subject has been examined by the writer.

† A critic of the present day will find fault with the rhyme even of the first lines—

“O Solitude, romantic maid!
Whether by nodding towers you tread.”

‡ “The fact of their (certain descriptions of fish) being poisonous when eaten is equally notorious; and the cause equally inscrutable. My poor worthy friend Dr. Grainger, who resided for many years at St. Christopher's assured me, that of the fish caught of the same kind at one end of the island, some were the best and most wholesome in the world; while others, taken at a different end, were always dangerous and most commonly fatal.”

country youth, to be provided for by some of his brother's influential friends; for although at the age of twenty-one, he possessed neither provision nor profession to enable him to obtain it.

The error as to his brother's power of serving him was soon apparent. However eminent might be his friends, the honour of their acquaintance by no means implied the freedom of drawing upon their persons or their patronage, had they such to bestow; while Oliver, pressed by the difficulty of providing for his own wants, found no little embarrassment in the demands of another. When Charles expressed disappointment, as he told Mr. Bindley many years afterwards at not finding his brother in better circumstances, the latter gaily replied, "All in good time, my dear boy; I shall be richer by-and-by. Besides you see, I am not in positive want. Addison, let me tell you, wrote his poem of the Campaign in a garret in the Haymarket, three stories high; and you see I am not come to that yet, for I have only got to the *second* story."

The stay in London of Charles was not therefore protracted; and as he came without previous communication with his brother, quitted it in nearly a similar manner. Tinctured with an equal spirit of adventure, dispirited by ill success, loath to return to Ireland no better than he quitted it, and determined to try his fortune in some way, he is said to have embarked in a humble capacity for Jamaica. Here, and in others of the islands, he continued, by his own account, for above thirty years without communicating with his family, who consequently believed him dead. Thus Oliver writes to his brother Maurice in January, 1770:—"You talked of being my only brother; I don't understand you—where is Charles." There is reason, however, to believe that he visited Ireland previous to the voyage, otherwise it would seem incredible how the Poet could be so long unacquainted with his destination or supposed death. He did not revisit England till 1791, some of the particulars of which bear an air of romance; they belong, however, to a future page.

The presence of Charles in London, and the nature of his own pursuits there, are alluded to in the following letter of Oliver to his brother-in-law, which breathes great affection for his friends, a strong attachment to the scenes of his youth and with some sharp strictures on his country, no inconsiderable regard for it. It was written soon after quitting the Review. In the opening passage there is some obscurity. He talks of four years having elapsed since his last letters went to Ireland; this can apply only to such as were addressed to Mr. Hodson, which was correct; but he had written from the Continent to his brother Henry, to Mr. Contarine, to Mrs. Lawder, and, it is believed, to Mr. Mills of Roscommon.

"To Daniel Hodson, Esq., at Lishoy, near Ballymahon, Ireland.

"DEAR SIR,

"It may be four years since my last letters went to Ireland,—

to you in particular. I received no answer; probably because you never wrote to me. My brother Charles, however, informs me of the fatigue you were at in soliciting a subscription to assist me, not only among my friends and relatives, but acquaintance in general. Though my pride might feel some repugnance at being thus relieved, yet my gratitude can suffer no diminution. How much am I obliged to you, to them, for such generosity, or (why should not your virtues have their proper name?) for such charity to me at that juncture. Sure I am born to ill fortune, to be so much a debtor and unable to repay. But to say no more of this: too many professions of gratitude are often considered as indirect petitions for future favours. Let me only add, that my not receiving that supply was the cause of my present establishment at London. You may easily imagine what difficulties I had to encounter, left as I was without friends, recommendations, money, or imprudence; and that in a country where being born an Irishman was sufficient to keep me unemployed. Many in such circumstances would have had recourse to the friar's cord, or the suicide's halter. But with all my follies I had principle to resist the one, and resolution to combat the other.

"I suppose you desire to know my present situation. As there is nothing in it at which I should blush, or which mankind could censure, I see no reason for making it a secret. In short, by a very little practice as a physician, and a very little reputation as a poet, I make a shift to live. Nothing is more apt to introduce us to the gates of the muses than poverty; but it were well if they only left us at the door. The mischief is, they sometimes choose to give us their company to the entertainment; and want, instead of being gentleman-usher, often turns master of the ceremonies.

"Thus, upon learning I write, no doubt you imagine I starve; and the name of an author naturally reminds you of a garret. In this particular I do not think proper to undeceive my friends. But whether I eat or starve, live in a first floor or four pair of stairs high, I still remember them with ardour; nay, my very country comes in for a share of my affection. Unaccountable fondness for country, this *maladie du pays*, as the French call it! Unaccountable that he should still have an affection for a place who never, when in it, received above common civility; who never brought any thing out of it except his brogue and his blunders. Surely my affection is equally ridiculous with the Scotchman's, who refused to be cured of the itch, because it made him unco' thoughtful of his wife and bonny Inverary.

"But now to be serious,—let me ask myself what gives me a wish to see Ireland again? The country is a fine one, perhaps? no. There are good company in Ireland? no. The conversation there is generally made up of a smutty toast or a bawdy song; the vivacity supported by some humble cousin, who had just folly enough to earn his dinner. Then perhaps there's more wit and learning among the Irish? Oh, lord, no! There has been more money spent in the encouragement of the Padareen mare there one season, than given in

rewards to learned men since the time of Usher. All their productions in learning amount to perhaps a translation, or a few tracts in divinity; and all their productions in wit to just nothing at all.* Why the plague, then, so fond of Ireland? Then all at once, because you, my dear friend, and a few more who are exceptions to the general picture, have a residence there. This it is that gives me all the pangs I feel in separation. I confess I carry this spirit sometimes to the souring the pleasures I at present possess. If I go to the opera where Signora Columba pours out all the mazes of melody, I sit and sigh for Lishoy fireside, and Johnny Armstrong's 'Last Good Night,' from Peggy Golden. If I climb Hampstead-hill, than where nature never exhibited a more magnificent prospect, I confess it fine; but then I had rather be placed on the little mount before Lishoy gate, and there take in—to me—the most pleasing horizon in nature.

"Before Charles came hither, my thoughts sometimes found refuge from severer studies among my friends in Ireland. I fancied strange revolutions at home; but I find it was the rapidity of my own motion that gave an imaginary one to objects really at rest. No alterations there. Some friends, he tells me, are still lean, but very rich; others very fat, but still very poor. Nay, all the news I hear of you is, that you sally out in visits among the neighbours, and sometimes make a migration from the blue bed to the brown. I could from my heart wish that you and she (Mrs. Hodson,) and Lishoy and Ballymahon, and all of you, would fairly make a migration into Middlesex; though, upon second thoughts, this might be attended with a few inconveniences. Therefore, as the mountain will not come to Mahomet, why Mahomet shall go to the mountain; or, to speak plain English, as you cannot conveniently pay me a visit, if next summer I can contrive to be absent six weeks from London, I shall spend three of them among my friends in Ireland. But first, believe me, my design is purely to visit, and neither to cut a figure nor levy contributions,—neither to excite envy nor solicit favour; in fact, my circumstances are adapted to neither. I am too poor to be gazed at, and too rich to need assistance.

* We must not be displeased with Goldsmith for a sketch so remarkably corroborated by that of another of our able and intelligent countrymen, Lord Orrery. The coincidence is curious being written not long before, though not published till long afterwards, and could only arise from the representation being correct. It is useless to complain of this, irritable and sensitive as the national temperament is to reproof: the knowledge of our faults is a necessary step towards their correction; and it should never be forgotten, that where letters are not cultivated with something like warmth by the gentry, the lower orders must be proportionably low in the scale of intelligence, to which no doubt, many of their excesses and irregularities in Ireland, are owing. Lord Orrery writes, May 1747, from his seat at Caledon:—

"I have lately passed a fortnight in Dublin. All my leisure time was employed in the booksellers' shops, and particularly in search of such books as you have mentioned to me. Many of them are not to be found on our Hibernian coast. When St. Patrick banished poisonous animals, the saint in his fury probably cursed books into the bargain. He certainly wished ignorance might succeed him; and I am sorry to tell you that scarce a gentleman in Ireland (although he be a better Protestant than ever St. Patrick dreaded) goes further in literature than *Urban's* English Magazine, or *Faulkner's* Irish Journal."

"You see, dear Dan, how long I have been talking about myself; but attribute my vanity to my affection: as every man is fond of himself, and I consider you as a second self, I imagine you will consequently be pleased with these instances of egotism. * * *

My dear Sir, these things give me real uneasiness, and I could wish to redress them. But at present there is hardly a kingdom in Europe in which I am not a debtor. I have already discharged my most threatening and pressing demands, for we must be just before we can be grateful. For the rest, I need not say (you know I am)

"Your affectionate kinsman,

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"Temple Exchange Coffee-house,
near Temple Bar,
(where you may direct an answer,)
December 27, 1757."

At this period he was occupied on a translation of some length from the French, bearing the following very ample and descriptive title-page; it came out toward the end of February, 1758:—

"The Memoirs of a Protestant, condemned to the Gallies of France for his Religion. Written by himself. Comprehending an account of the various distresses he suffered in slavery, and his constancy in supporting almost every cruelty that bigoted zeal could inflict, or human nature sustain; also a description of the gallies, and the service in which they are employed. The whole interspersed with anecdotes relative to the general history of the times for a period of thirteen years, during which the author continued in slavery, till he was at last set free at the intercession of the Court of Great Britain. In two volumes. Translated from the original, just published at the Hague, by James Willington."

Griffiths, who had a proprietary interest in the work, and whose name appears in the titlepage as one of the publishers, acknowledged it to be by Goldsmith; the copyright however, as Isaac Reed ascertained, was sold by him to C. Dilly, the bookseller in the Poultry, for twenty guineas. Boswell, who was afterwards much connected with the Dillys, alludes probably to this among other pieces of the Poet which he had through that channel the opportunity of tracing, in a letter to Bishop Percy, of March 12, 1790, when the project alluded to seemed advancing to completion. "Pray, how does your edition of Goldsmith go on? I am in the way of getting at many additional works of his, which I shall communicate to your lordship."*

The original in French, forming an octavo volume of nearly six hundred pages, now rendered into English in two duodecimos, was noticed in the Monthly Review of the preceding year; the version is executed with vigour, owing much no doubt to the taste and skill of the translator, who whatever be his correctness of interpretation, exhibits his usual ease and perspicuity of style. Griffiths, in an ar-

* MS. Correspondence, in the possession of W. R. Mason, Esq.

ticle in the Review bearing his own signature, whence we may infer there was then no serious disagreement, speaks of him as "the ingenious translator, who really deserves this name on account of the spirit of the performance, though we have little to say in praise of his accuracy;" terms nearly similar to those used in the same journal in characterizing his translations after his death. Why the name of Willington was affixed to the book rather than his own, does not appear; but it must be remembered that many of our writers at that time were much more shy of committing their names to the public, however well known in private, than at present; and always impressed, as he appears to have been, with the belief of taking a high station in letters, he was probably unwilling that his name should appear attached to an inferior work, until he had shown ability to do something better. A name, however, being deemed necessary, that of a college acquaintance who is supposed to have been then in London pursuing the same precarious profession of letters, was used with his consent.*

The tale which it narrates is sufficiently distressful: all the tyranny that barbarous bigotry could inflict seems to have been used by the agents of Louis XIV. on the revocation of the Edict of Nantes; and from what we know from other quarters, there is no reason to believe the details given here exaggerated. Fortunately, Christianity itself is not necessarily answerable for the atrocities of its professors. Catholicism, in her scorching zeal for exclusive tenets, has incurred debts to humanity which she never can repay; but one of the modes by which these are in part requited is the condemnation passed upon her misdeeds by even the more enlightened of her own creed, and the terror inspired by the least prospect of her recovery of power in all who profess another.

The preface to this work, like so many of his fugitive pieces, has been hitherto inedited; it is written with care, has all his manner, is rarely to be met with, and therefore will find place in the present edition of his works.

"Perhaps," he says, in allusion to the prevailing passion for novel reading, and the truth of the narrative, "what he thinks its excellences may be considered as defects,—what he hopes may give it popularity will contribute to assign to it neglect. Thus, for instance, it cannot be recommended as a grateful entertainment to the numerous readers of reigning romance, as it is strictly true. No events are here to astonish; no unexpected incidents to surprise; no such high-finished pictures as captivate the imagination, and have made fiction fashionable. Our reader must be content with the simple exhibition of truth, and, consequently, of nature; he must be satisfied to see Vice triumphant, and Virtue in distress; to see men punished or rewarded, not as his wishes, but as Providence has thought proper to direct: for all here wears the face of sincerity."

* "1747, Decembris 2^o.—*Jacobus Willington Pens:—Filius Johannis generosi—Annum agens 16—Natus in comitatu de Tipperary—Educatus sub ferula Ma: Grubese—Tutor D. Whittingham.*" (*Register of Trinity College, Dublin.*)

Diligent search in the periodical works of this year for such occasional pieces as may have come from his pen, has not been attended with material success. That he was not idle we are assured, although not possessed of sufficient paternal partiality to own or reclaim his offspring; and seems rather, as will be seen in one of his letters, to be amused at the perplexity to which this omission may give rise among future biographers. But there is one journal which, from being established at this period, published by Griffiths, and aided by the papers of three of his acquaintance, may likewise have been assisted by his contributions.

This was "The Grand Magazine of Universal Intelligence and Monthly Chronicle of our Own Times," projected toward the end of 1757 by a few printers and booksellers, and commenced the first month of the following year. Who the editor was, does not appear. Griffiths signs the dedication, which, like various similar publications of this period, is to the popular idol Mr. Pitt. Owen Ruffhead, although writing at the same period largely in the Review, took a considerable share in the prose department;* Grainger and Percy, as will appear by the subjoined passages from the correspondence of the former,† furnished pieces of poetry, and possibly of prose.

* In the fly-leaf of Isaac Reed's copy of this Magazine is the following memorandum:—"The dissertation on the Constitution of England, and most of the political original Essays in these Magazines, were the production of Owen Ruffhead, Esq., as his friend Mr. Fountain informed me this 25th March, 1775.—J. REED."

† To the Reverend Mr. Percy Grainger writes, toward the end of 1757,—“Mr. Strahan (a particular friend of mine,) and some others, are at present upon an extensive plan of a monthly chronicle; and as they have often heard me praise your poetic talents, they desire me to engage you to furnish them with poetry. They are determined to publish nothing in that way but what is good; and therefore they are very urgent with me for your Scotch Song. Shall I let them have it? It can do you no harm; or rather it will do you honour, when its author is named. I shall now and then send them a little supply; and if you will also, at your leisure, let them have some fresh wholesome country fare, they will not be niggardly to us in their acknowledgments.”—Again, he communicates to the same friend in February, 1768, “The Latin poem you sent me

‘Is all with Venus’ cestus bound.’

Pray who is the author of it? Am I to congratulate you on this happy effort of genius? It goes into the Grand (Magazine) this month, where you will again find your friend (Grainger himself) making fine speeches to a Water Nymph, and hymning the praises of Cheerfulness. The proprietors are determined to admit nothing but what is new and seems to be beautiful. Do let us have something of yours for next month. You and I, methinks, may supply them with poetry for one half year at least.”—In April of the same year he says, “Have you seen the March Magazine? The two Sonnets are there inserted, as the ‘Hint to Poets’ will be in the next month. The Elegy and Dialogue are mine.”

From this correspondence it appears that Grainger contributed to the Magazine three Elegies in the January Number;—Hymn to Cheerfulness,—To the Nymph of P * * * (Pitkelly) Waters, in February; Elegy and Dialogue in that of March; and Ode to Contentment in that of June. About the same period he translated Leander to Hero and Hero to Leander, for Mr. Percy's version of Ovid's Epistles. Percy's contributions positively known are, the Latin Poem in the February Magazine, beginning

“Effluxit quondam blandum meditata laborem,”

and two Sonnets signed G. in that of April. The Scotch Song alluded to was probably the celebrated one, “O Nanny, wilt thou gang with me?” It did not, however, appear in the Magazine.

No positive testimony has been traced of Goldsmith being engaged in this work; although the coincidences noticed, and the tenor and style of some of the papers, render it probable. Nothing in consequence is derived from this source for his works. The papers which bear the strongest resemblance to his manner and some of his sentiments, and not being *political* did not probably come from Ruffhead, are the Preface to the first volume,—On the Character of the Present Age,—On Happiness,—The Necessity of a Learned Education for Men of Fortune—On the Complexion of the Times,—On the Abuse of Words,—On Asylums and Reformatories,—On the Unequal Temper of the English,—On the Station of Kings,—Distinctions between Pride and Vanity. It may favour the idea of his being connected with this magazine, that two long extracts from “Memoirs of a Protestant,” evidently with the view of attracting more than usual public attention to the translation, are given in the March and April numbers.

It may have been about the period of this publication coming out, or immediately previous, that finding more certain and permanent provision for the wants of life necessary, he was induced to resume the superintendence of Dr. Milner’s school, on the promise of that gentleman to use his interest in procuring him a medical appointment in India. The precise time of his return to Peckham, if indeed we are to believe Miss Milner’s account of his protracted or occasional residence there correct, is uncertain; nor was his stay there long. About the middle of the summer we find him again dependent on his literary labours in London. He had yet acquired no name, and felt that a work of some research or permanent interest, if literature should continue to constitute his chief pursuit, was necessary to secure the station at which he aimed, and to render even his fugitive pieces more productive in the literary market. In such intervals as were not devoted to the supply of immediate demands, he at this time projected and partly executed a work for which his journey on the Continent and acquaintance with its authors, acquired in part during his career as reviewer, furnished a portion of materials,—“An Inquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning in Europe.” He worked upon it with diligence; brought to the subject all the information he possessed; and with the view of disappointing the cupidity of the Dublin booksellers, who by reprinting works of merit published in London, deprived authors of the fair reward of their labours accruing from the sale in Ireland, he wrote to his friends there, soliciting their aid in procuring subscriptions, for which the requisite number of volumes should be transmitted thither.

One of his letters on this occasion, addressed to his relative and former College companion, Mr. Mills, of Roscommon, affords a finished specimen of mingled delicacy of solicitation, and skill in composition. Trifling as was the favour asked, it appears by a subsequent letter, neither to have been granted, nor his application even answered; this may explain why little, if indeed any, communication took place with that gentleman afterward; who, however,

could admire and venerate when raised to fame, him whom unknown and in poverty he had declined to aid.

"To Edward Mills, Esq., near Roscommon, Ireland.

"DEAR SIR,

"You have quitted, I find, that plan of life which you once intended to pursue,* and given up ambition for domestic tranquillity. Were I to consult your satisfaction alone in this change, I have the utmost reason to congratulate your choice; but when I consider my own, I cannot avoid feeling some regret that one of my few friends has declined a pursuit in which he had every reason to expect success. The truth is, like the rest of the world, I am self-interested in my concern; and do not so much consider the happiness you have acquired, as the honour I have probably lost in the change. I have often let my fancy loose when you were the subject, and have imagined you gracing the bench, or thundering at the bar; while I have taken no small pride to myself, and whispered all that I could come near that this was my cousin. Instead of this, it seems you are merely contented to be a happy man,—to be esteemed only by your acquaintance,—to cultivate your paternal acres, to take unmolested a nap under one of your own hawthorns, or in Mrs. Mills' bedchamber, which even a poet must confess is rather the more comfortable place of the two.

"But however your resolutions may be altered with respect to your situation in life, I persuade myself they are unalterable with regard to your friends in it. I cannot think the world has taken such entire possession of that heart (once so susceptible of friendship,) as not to have left a corner there for a friend or two; but I flatter myself that even I have my place among the number. This I have a claim to from the similitude of our dispositions; or, setting that aside, I can demand it as a right by the most equitable law in nature—I mean that of retaliation; for, indeed, you have more than your share in mine.

"I am a man of few professions; and yet this very instant I cannot avoid the painful apprehension that my present professions (which speak not half my feelings) should be considered only as a pretext to cover a request, as I have a request to make. No, my dear Ned, I know you are too generous to think so; and you know me (to be) too proud to stoop to unnecessary insincerity. I have a request, it is true, to make; but as I know to whom I am a petitioner, I make it without diffidence or confusion. It is in short this: I am going to publish a book in London, entitled 'An Essay on the Present State of Taste and Literature in Europe.' Every work published here the printers in Ireland republish there, without giving the author the least consideration for his copy. I would in this respect disappoint their avarice, and have all the additional advantages that may result from the sale of my performance there to myself.

"The book is now printing in London; and I have requested Dr.

* He had been intended for the Bar.

Radcliff, Mr. Lawder, Mr. Bryanton, my brother Mr. Henry Goldsmith, and brother-in-law Mr. Hodson, to circulate my proposals among their acquaintance. The same request I now make to you, and have accordingly given directions to Mr. Bradley, bookseller, in Dame Street, Dublin, to send you a hundred proposals. Whatever subscriptions pursuant to those proposals, you may receive, when collected may be transmitted to Mr. Bradley, who will give a receipt for the money, and be accountable for the books. I shall not by a paltry apology, excuse myself for putting you to this trouble. Were I not convinced that you found more pleasure in doing good-natured things than uneasiness in being employed in them, I should not have singled you out on this occasion. It is probable you would comply with such a request if it tended to the encouragement of any man of learning whatsoever; what then, may not he expect who has claims of family and friendship to enforce his?

“I am, dear Sir,

“Your sincere Friend and humble Servant,

“OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”

“London, Temple Exchange Coffee-house,
August 7, 1758.”*

We have another letter in a very different strain, written the succeeding week to his friend Bryanton, whom he had formerly addressed from Edinburgh. It is an effort of gayety to throw off a weight that presses too heavily on his situation and prospects to be easily displaced. We are amused by his humour, yet cannot but feel for a man of genius in the condition to which he shortly indeed, but forcibly confesses himself reduced,—“in a garret writing for bread, and expecting to be dunned for a milk score.” His spirits, however, seem never to have been long depressed: a constitutional, perhaps national, buoyancy of spirits or humour, raised him above the gloom that at times threatened to prove overwhelming; and a consciousness never wholly extinguished, of the possession of powers that would one day enable him to emerge from obscurity, inspired hope in the most unpromising situations.

Of this nature are a few of the following playful anticipations of future fame, jocularly thrown out indeed, but not less certainly entertained. Nor is the sally relative to the difficulties of future biographers and commentators in tracing his earlier writings, less amusing than it was prophetic: the fact, sometimes vexatiously enough, as must be confessed, has been literally verified.

To the Rev. Dr. Handcock of Dublin, the writer and the public are indebted for this interesting letter, transcribed from the original in his possession, addressed to his father-in-law. It is necessary to state, that portions of the paper being worn away by time, a few sentences now imperfect, are attempted to be supplied from the con-

* Bishop Percy dates this letter in 1759, but slight consideration or inquiry would have detected the error. The work mentioned in it came out in April of that year; and consequently, as there was no second edition then, could not be printing in August.

text, and it is hoped, with a near approach to accuracy. The passages thus introduced are inclosed within brackets.

"To Robert Bryanton, Esq., at Ballymahon, Ireland.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have heard it remark'd,* I believe by yourself, that they who are drunk, or out of their wits, fancy every body else in the same condition: mine is a friendship that neither distance nor time can efface, which is probably the reason that, for the soul of me, I can't avoid thinking yours of the same complexion; and yet I have many reasons for being of a contrary opinion, else why in so long an absence was I never made a partner in your concerns? To hear of your successes would have given me the utmost pleasure; and a communication of your very disappointments would divide the uneasiness I too frequently feel for my own. Indeed, my dear Bob, you don't conceive how unkindly you have treated one whose circumstances afford him few prospects of pleasure, except those reflected from the happiness of his friends. However, since you have not let me hear from you, I have in some measure disappointed your neglect by frequently thinking of you. Every day do I remember the calm anecdotes of your life, from the fire-side to the easy chair; recall the various adventures that first cemented our friendship,—the school, the college, or the tavern; preside in fancy over your cards; am displeased at your bad play when the rubber goes against you, though not with all that agony of soul as when I once was your partner.

"Is it not strange that two of such like affections should be so much separated and so differently employed as we are? You seem placed at the centre of fortune's wheel, and let it revolve never so fast, seem insensible of the motion. I seem to have been tied to the circumference, and [turned] disagreeably round like an wh— in a whirligig. [I sate] down with an intention to chide, and yet methinks [I have forgot] my resentment already. The truth is, I am a [simpleton with] regard to you; I may attempt to bluster, [but like] Anacreon, my heart is respondent only to softer affections. And yet now I think on't again, I will be angry. God's curse, Sir! who am I? Eh! what am I? Do you know whom you have offended? A man whose character may one of these days be mentioned with profound respect in a German comment or Dutch dictionary; whose name you will probably hear ushered in by a Doctissimus Doctissimorum, or heel-pieced with a long Latin termination. Think how Goldsmithius, or Gubblegurchius, or some such sound, as rough as a nutmeg-grater, will become me? Think of that!—God's curse, Sir! who am I? I must own my ill-natured contemporaries have not hitherto paid me those honours I have had such just reason to expect. I have not yet seen my face reflected in all the lively display of red

* A few of the contractions of the original are retained. Several of his earlier printed pieces, and most of his letters, exhibit similar contractions.

and white paints on any sign-posts in the suburbs. Your handkerchief weavers seem as yet unacquainted with my merits or physiognomy, and the very snuff-box makers appear to have forgot their respect. Tell them all from me, they are a set of Gothic, barbarous, ignorant scoundrels. There will come a day, no doubt it will—I beg you may live a couple of hundred years longer only to see the day—when the Scaligers and Daciers will vindicate my character, give learned editions of my labours, and bless the times with copious comments on the text. You shall see how they will fish up the heavy scoundrels who disregard me now, or will then offer to cavil at my productions. How will they bewail the times that suffered so much genius to lie neglected. If ever my works find their way to Tartary or China, I know the consequence. Suppose one of your Chinese Owanowitzers instructing one of your Tartarian Chianobacchi—you see I use Chinese names to show my own erudition, as I shall soon make our Chinese talk like an Englishman to show his. This may be the subject of the lecture:—

“Oliver Goldsmith flourished in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He lived to be a hundred and three years old, [and in that] age may justly be styled the sun of [literature] and the Confucius of Europe. [Many of his earlier writings to the regret of the] learned world, were anonymous, and have probably been lost, because united with those of others. The first avowed piece the world has of his is entitled an ‘Essay on the Present State of Taste and Literature in Europe,’—a work well worth its weight in diamonds. In this he profoundly explains what learning is, and what learning is not. In this he proves that blockheads are not men of wit, and yet that men of wit are actually blockheads.’

“But as I choose neither to tire my Chinese Philosopher, nor you, nor myself, I must discontinue the oration, in order to give you a pause for admiration; and I find myself most violently disposed to admire too. Let me, then, stop my fancy to take a view of my future self; and, as the boys say, light down to see myself on horseback.* Well, now I am down, where the d—l is I? Oh, Gods! Gods! here in a garret writing for bread, and expecting to be dunned for a milk score! However, dear Bob, whether in penury or affluence, serious or gay, I am ever wholly thine.

“OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”

“London, Temple Exchange Coffee-house,
Temple Bar, Aug. 14, 1758.”

“Give my—no, not compliments neither, but something [the] most warm and sincere wish that you can conceive, to your mother, Mrs. Bryanton, to Miss Bryanton, to yourself; and if there be a favourite dog in the family, let me be remembered to it.”

The progress of his book and the desire of procuring subscrip-

* A common phrase among schoolboys in Ireland now, in ridiculing an unskilful appearance of their companions on horseback.

tions for it, induced at this time unusual (for him) diligence in writing private letters. To this is owing another dated on the day following the preceding; it is addressed to his cousin Mrs. Lawder, formerly Miss Contarine, and is admirable in its kind, mingling vivacity and humour with serious, if not melancholy, retrospections; and while professing a sturdy independence lest his professions of regard should be misconstrued, avowing past poverty in a sentence that cannot but give pain to every mind of ordinary sensibility:—he would “forget that ever he starved in those streets where Butler and Otway starved before him.” By this also we find what, from his affection and assistance to Oliver in all his imprudences and distresses we must regret, that the mind of Mr Contarine was now reduced to a state of imbecility. This letter, as appears from MS. correspondence of Malone with Bishop Percy,* was copied by the former at the house of his friend Mr. Metcalf, at Brighton, in 1809, from one in the possession of Mr. Carleton, nephew to the nobleman of that name, given to him by Mr. Mills, who received it from the family of the lady to whom it was written.

“To Mrs. Jane Lawder.

“If you should ask, why in an interval of so many years, you never heard from me, permit me, madam, to ask the same question. I have the best excuse in recrimination. I wrote to Kilmore from Leyden in Holland, from Louvain in Flanders, and Rouen in France, but received no answer. To what could I attribute this silence but to displeasure and forgetfulness? Whether I was right in my conjecture I do not pretend to determine; but this I must ingeniously own, that I have a thousand times in my turn endeavoured to forget them, whom I could not but look upon as forgetting me. I have attempted to blot their names from my memory, and, I confess it, spent whole days in efforts to tear their image from my heart. Could I have succeeded, you had not now been troubled with this renewal of a discontinued correspondence; but as every effort the restless make to procure sleep serves but to keep them waking, all my attempts contributed to impress what I would forget deeper on my imagination. But this subject I would willingly turn from, and yet, ‘for the soul of me,’ I can’t till I have said all.

“I was, madam, when I discontinued writing to Kilmore, in such circumstances, that all my endeavours to continue your regards might be attributed to wrong motives. My letters might be looked upon as the petitions of a beggar, and not the offerings of a friend; while all my professions, instead of being considered as the result of disinterested esteem, might be ascribed to venal insincerity. I believe indeed you had too much generosity to place them in such a light, but I could not bear even the shadow of such a suspicion. The most delicate friendships are always most sensible of the slightest invasion, and the strongest jealousy is ever attendant on

* In Mr. Mason’s Collection.

the warmest regard. I could not—I own I could not—continue a correspondence; for every acknowledgment for past favours might be considered as an indirect request for future ones, and where it might be thought I gave my heart from a motive of gratitude alone, when I was conscious of having bestowed it on much more disinterested principles.

“It is true this conduct might have been simple enough, but yourself must confess it was in character. Those who know me at all know that I have always been actuated by different principles from the rest of mankind, and while none regarded the interest of his friend more, no man on earth regarded his own less. I have often affected bluntness to avoid the imputation of flattery, have frequently seemed to overlook those merits too obvious to escape notice, and pretended disregard to those instances of good nature and good sense, which I could not fail tacitly to applaud; and all this lest I should be ranked amongst the grinning tribe, who say ‘very true’ to all that is said, who fill a vacant chair at a tea-table, whose narrow souls never moved in a wider circle than the circumference of a guinea, and who had rather be reckoning the money in your pocket than the virtue in your breast. All this, I say, I have done, and a thousand other very silly though very disinterested things in my time, and for all which no soul cares a farthing about me. God’s curse, madam! is it to be wondered, that he should once in his life forget you, who has been all his life forgetting himself?

“However it is probable you may one of these days see me turned into a perfect hunk, and as dark and intricate as a mouse-hole. I have already given my landlady orders for an entire reform in the state of my finances. I declaim against hot suppers, drink less sugar in my tea, and check my grate with brick-bats. Instead of hanging my room with pictures, I intend to adorn it with maxims of frugality. Those will make pretty furniture enough, and won’t be a bit too expensive; for I shall draw them all out with my own hands, and my landlady’s daughter shall frame them with the pairings of my black waistcoat. Each maxim is to be inscribed on a sheet of clean paper, and wrote with my best pen; of which the following will serve as a specimen:—‘Look sharp;’ ‘Mind the main chance;’ ‘Money is money now;’ ‘If you have a thousand pounds you can put your hands by your sides, and say you are worth a thousand pounds every day of the year;’ ‘Take a farthing from a hundred and it will be a hundred no longer.’ Thus, which way soever I turn my eyes, they are sure to meet one of those friendly monitors; and as we are told of an actor who hung his room round with looking-glass to correct the defects of his person, my apartment shall be furnished in a peculiar manner, to correct the errors of my mind.

“Faith! Madam, I heartily wish to be rich, if it were only for this reason, to say without a blush how much I esteem you; but, alas! I have many a fatigue to encounter before that happy time comes, when your poor old simple friend may again give a loose to the luxuriance of his nature, sitting by Kilmore fire-side, recount the

various adventures of a hard-fought life, laugh over the follies of the day, join his flute to your harpsichord, and forget that ever he starved in those streets, where Butler and Otway starved before him.

"And now I mention those great names—My uncle!—he is no more that soul of fire as when once I knew him. Newton and Swift grew dim with age as well as he. But what shall I say?—his mind was too active an inhabitant not to disorder the feeble mansion of its abode; for the richest jewels soonest wear their settings. Yet who but the fool would lament his condition! He now forgets the calamities of life. Perhaps indulgent heaven has given him a foretaste of that tranquillity here, which he so well deserves hereafter.

"But I must come to business; for business, as one of my maxims tells me, must be minded or lost. I am going to publish in London, a book entitled 'The Present state of Taste and Literature in Europe.' The booksellers in Ireland republish every performance there without making the author any consideration. I would, in this respect, disappoint their avarice, and have all the profits of my labour to myself. I must therefore request Mr. Lawder to circulate among his friends and acquaintances a hundred of my proposals, which I have given the bookseller, Mr. Bradley in Dame Street directions to send to him. If in pursuance of such circulation, he should receive any subscriptions, I entreat when collected they may be sent to Mr. Bradley as aforesaid, who will give a receipt, and be accountable for the work, or a return of the subscription. If this request (which, if it be complied with, will in some measure be an encouragement to a man of learning) should be disagreeable or troublesome, I would not press it; for I would be the last man on earth to have my labours go a-begging; but if I know Mr. Lawder (and sure I ought to know him,) he will accept the employment with pleasure. All I can say—if he writes a book, I will get him two hundred subscribers, and those of the best wits in Europe.

"Whether this request is complied with or not, I shall not be uneasy; but there is one petition I must make to him and to you, which I solicit with the warmest ardour, and in which I cannot bear a refusal. I mean, dear Madam, that I may be allowed to subscribe myself,

"Your ever affectionate and obliged kinsman,

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"Now see how I blot and blunder, when I am asking a favour.

"Temple-Exchange Coffee-House, Temple Bar,
August 15, 1758."

It was not probably till after these letters were written, as there is no allusion to the fact in either, that the professional appointment promised by Dr. Milner was obtained through the influence of Mr. Jones, an East India director. No record of the place to which he was destined, or of the precise time when the nomination took place,

can be found after a careful search in the India House.* The former indeed he states generally as being on the coast of Coromandel; the latter was no doubt September or October, 1758.

His views were now directed to prepare for the voyage, which required a considerable sum for one in his circumstances, destitute alike of money and of friends who could advance it. By the success alone of the book noticed as being in progress, could he hope to raise the necessary means; and even partial failure in that point threatened to mar the whole scheme. With this contingency perhaps in prospect, he wrote the following letter to his brother-in-law. A few passages would induce the belief, that however desirous of visiting certain portions of the East, and securing a certain income, the destination now contemplated was not quite to his satisfaction. He is, indeed, laudably desirous of escaping from uncertainty and penury to a station more commensurate with his deserts, to forsake scenes and associates alien to his choice, and in the true spirit of Horace, *Odi profanum vulgus*, to "separate himself from the vulgar as much in his circumstances as he was in his sentiments." Yet there is likewise something of disinclination to quit a scene where, as he says, "his fortune is growing kinder," as well as the "refined conversation of which he is permitted to partake." This state of irresolution, shown even in detailing the promised advantages of the expedition, exhibits the honest desire of independence on the one hand, counterbalanced on the other by hope, however vague and distant, of literary fame. The letter is without date, but written about November 1758.

"To Daniel Hodson, Esq. at Lishoy, near Ballymahon, Ireland.

"DEAR SIR,

"You cannot expect regularity in one who is regular in nothing. Nay, were I forced to love you by rule, I dare venture to say, I could never do it sincerely. Take me then with all my faults. Let me write when I please; for you see I say what I please, and am only thinking aloud when writing to you. I suppose you have heard of my intention of going to the East Indies. The place of my destination is one of the factories on the coast of Coromandel, and I go in quality of physician and surgeon; for which the Company has signed my warrant, which has already cost me 10*l*. I must also pay 50*l*. for my passage, and 10*l*. for my sea stores; and the other incidental expenses of my equipment will amount to 60*l*. or 70*l*. more. The salary is but trifling, viz. 100*l*. per annum; but the other advantages, if a person be prudent, are considerable. The practice of the place, if I am rightly informed, generally amounts to not less than 1000*l*. per annum, for which the appointed physician has an

* A gentleman of the Secretary's office has examined the minutes of the Court of Directors from 1755 to 1764, and another the minutes of the Committee of Shipping from the beginning of 1757 to the end of 1760, without finding the name. The appointment not having been matured, is no doubt the cause of the omission.

exclusive privilege. This, with the advantages resulting from trade, with the high interest which money bears, viz. 20l. per cent., are the inducements which persuade me to undergo the fatigues of the sea, the dangers of war, and the still greater dangers of the climate; which induce me to leave a place where I am every day gaining friends and esteem, and where I might enjoy all the conveniences of life.

"I am certainly wrong not to be contented with what I already possess, trifling as it is; for should I ask myself one serious question—What is it I want?—what can I answer? My desires are as capricious as the big-bellied woman's, who longed for a piece of her husband's nose. I have no certainty, it is true; but why cannot I do as some men of more merit, who have lived on more precarious terms? Scarron used jestingly to call himself the Marquis of Que-nault, which was the name of the bookseller who employed him; and why may not I assert my privilege and quality on the same pretensions?

"Yet upon deliberation, whatever airs I give myself on this side of the water, my dignity, I fancy, would be evaporated before I reached the other. I know you have in Ireland a very different idea of a man who writes for bread, though Swift and Steele did so in the earliest part of their lives. You imagine, I suppose, that every author by profession lives in a garret, wears shabby clothes, and converses with the meanest company. Yet I do not believe there is one single writer who has abilities to translate a French novel that does not keep better company, wear finer clothes, and live more genteelly, than many who pride themselves for nothing else in Ireland. I confess it again, my dear Dan, that nothing but the wildest ambition could prevail on me to leave the enjoyment of the refined conversation which I am sometimes admitted to partake in, for uncertain fortune and paltry show. You cannot conceive how I am sometimes divided; to leave all that is dear to me gives me pain; but when I consider I may possibly acquire a genteel independence for life; when I think of that dignity which philosophy claims, to raise itself above contempt and ridicule; when I think thus, I eagerly long to embrace every opportunity of separating myself from the vulgar, as much in my circumstances as I am already in my sentiments.

"I am going to publish a book, for an account of which I refer you to a letter which I wrote to my brother Goldsmith. Circulate for me among your acquaintance a hundred proposals, which I have given orders may be sent to you; and if in pursuance of such circulation you should receive any subscriptions, let them, when collected, be transmitted to Mr. Bradley, who will give a receipt for the same.

* * * * *

"I know not how my desire of seeing Ireland, which had so long slept, has again revived with so much ardour. So weak is my temper and so unsteady, that I am frequently tempted, particularly when low-spirited, to return home and leave my fortune, though just beginning to look kinder. But it shall not be. In five or six years I

expect to indulge these transports. I find I want constitution, and a strong steady disposition, which alone makes men great. I will however correct my faults, since I am conscious of them."

The allusion to the profits supposed to be derived from translating foreign works of fiction, may lead us to this period as the probable date of one of his undertakings for the booksellers. French novels were then much in vogue; nor were we unwilling to receive from that source an article with which the fertility of our writers now supplies all the rest of Europe. Translations of such works necessarily formed a part of the business of those who pursued literature as a profession; and in this department also, as will be observed by the following receipt transcribed from the original, in his own handwriting, Goldsmith took a share. It is, like so many others of his letters and memoranda, without date. No account of the work to which it relates can be found in any of the journals of the time; and therefore as the original title mentioned here seems vague and unsatisfactory, another more precise or popular may have been adopted previous to publication.

"Received from Mr. Ralph Griffiths* the sum of ten pounds ten shillings, for the translation of a book entitled *Memoirs of my Lady B.*, as witness my hand.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH."†

Difficulty in providing necessary supplies for the voyage, or the unsteadiness of mind confessed by him as one of his faults, produced soon afterward, as might almost be conjectured from the preceding letter, its necessary results; for his views on India were for a time suspended. Looking seriously to the length of absence necessary to acquire the promised independence, the pain felt in quitting his native country, and the improbability, when once away, of returning to it, probably occasioned distaste to the expedition altogether. The navy or army promised all he now wanted,—present provision and less permanent removal from England. To one of these departments his medical services were now tendered, induced by the example of several acquaintance, and the remembrance of Grainger and Smollett, who, in the spirit of adventure, or for a more extensive observation of mankind, pursued a similar course in early life.

Either of the services could be joined with a less expensive outfit than that required for an India voyage, and might be quitted with greater facility if uncongenial to his feelings. Prompted by such considerations, he presented himself at Surgeons' Hall for examination as an hospital mate, in December, 1758; and to the utter discomfiture of all his projects, and with feelings nearly akin to despair, was rejected as unqualified.

Whether this mortifying result arose from want of knowledge of

* An allusion to the character of Goldsmith's translations, originating probably from Griffiths himself, appears in the *Monthly Review* for August, 1776, in the article on the Poet's translation of Scarron's *Comic Romance*.

† From the MS. collection of the late Mr. Heber.

minute anatomy, which having been long from the schools might be easily forgotten, or of operative surgery, to which contemplating physic as his peculiar province he might not have paid sufficient attention; whether his memory or presence of mind were overpowered by the apprehension felt by every surgical tyro on such occasions; or he was disconcerted by the banter of some such examiner as Roderick Random encountered, it is vain to inquire. The circumstance is curious in itself, and is now for the first time disclosed. No communication on the subject appears to have been made to his relatives, nor was it even surmised by any of his acquaintance or biographers, although at the moment no doubt known to a few more intimate associates, who were sufficiently reserved to keep the secret. The unexplained relinquishment of the India appointment first excited suspicion of the fact in the mind of the writer, which was confirmed by a rumour, vague indeed and unsatisfactory, of the same nature, communicated by an eminent physician.* The cause of such abandonment then became obvious, rejection for one branch of service necessarily disqualifying him for all; and by the regulations of medical bodies, no re-examination of an unsuccessful applicant could be had under a period of three or six months, for the advantage of further study. Accident, therefore, or something akin to accident, did for him what it has done for others of our eminent men, who had determined to proceed abroad in the pursuit of wealth,—it kept him at home, to acquire fame; and as in the instances of Burke and Burns, to elevate the literature of our country.

The following extract is from the books of the College of Surgeons; it appears he was the only unsuccessful candidate on that day:—

“At a Court of Examiners held at the Theatre, 21st December, 1758. Present (*blank.*)

(Here several names precede and follow that of the Poet, as having passed for the medical service of the army and navy; but it is only necessary to quote the one preceding him, from its connexion with the situation for which he was examined.)

“James Bernard, mate to an hospital. Oliver Goldsmith, found not qualified for ditto.”

* The late Dr. Maton, physician to the King; through my friend Mr. Copland Hutchison.—Dr. M. believed he had been rejected at *Apothecaries' Hall*, but on inquiry this proved to be an error. Surgeons' Hall was then searched, and the fact discovered.

CHAPTER VIII.

Quarrel with Mr. Griffiths, and Letter to him.—Kenrick.—Letter to Rev. Henry Goldsmith.—Voltaire's Life.—Edward Purdon.—Inquiry into Polite Learning.—Connexion with the Critical Review.

THE results attending this failure were more serious to the distressed candidate than merely momentary vexation. Unable, from not obtaining the expected appointment, to repay certain pecuniary obligations incurred upon the occasion to his former employer in the *Monthly Review*, he found not only his literary and moral character attacked in that journal in consequence of this default, but a story repeated in conversation in the same ungenerous strain by its proprietor, as, indeed, it continued to be by him to a late period of life in the literary circles of London. The fact says little for the generosity or forbearance of Griffiths, who, from the letters of Grainger to Percy,* appears to have been considered by the former a sharp tradesman; and if we may judge from his conduct to Goldsmith, not the mildest of creditors.

The best apology for this seeming harshness is, that when mentioning the anecdote even within the present century to more than one surviving auditor, he did not fully know, or at least never told, the real situation of the unhappy debtor—the attempt at Surgeons' Hall—his rejection, and consequent inability to meet any pecuniary obligations. All this, indeed, the Poet, deeming it a species of disgrace, and a reflection upon his professional talents, kept secret, or, if known, it was confined to the knowledge of a few. Something of the severity shown him by Griffiths may have been owing to this reserve, which he was unwilling to throw off, and his story of apology may have appeared therefore to the bookseller a fiction. The imputations cast upon his character are still to be seen in the pages of the *Review*; the contradiction which a sense of the injustice done him eventually called forth, occurs only after an interval of two years. On this account, as well as to explain a letter to which it gave rise, the disagreement requires to be noticed at length.

When about to appear before the examining surgeons, his apparel being defective, application was made to Griffiths for the use of such as was deemed of a more suitable description. The precise use to be made of it appears not to have been stated, dreading perhaps publicity in case of the failure that actually occurred; but an intimation was given that he had obtained, or expected to obtain, a situation in the army, which without an appropriate dress to appear in might be withheld. The request was acceded to: the bookseller became

* In the possession of Mr. W. R. Mason.—One of the cautions given to Percy is not to trust to any verbal agreement with the bookseller.

security to a tailor; the conditions of this favour being immediate return of the clothes to the former when the purpose had been served, or speedy discharge of the debt; while the distressed author, in order to evince his sense of gratitude, immediately furnished four articles for the Review, which stand first in the number for December, 1758, and in the copy before noticed are there acknowledged as his by the proprietor.* The failure to pass, as may be supposed, precluded fulfilment of the promise to pay. Driven to despair by ill success, forgetful of the imputations to which breach of agreement by withholding the clothes might give rise, or urged by necessities pressing and irresistible, increased by additional expense incurred by preliminary arrangements for the examination, the articles supplied were, instead of being returned, consigned for the supply of immediate wants, to the pawnbroker.

Here they were discovered by Griffiths, who becoming alarmed for the safety of some books lent to the Poet, probably to review, wrote him an abusive letter. The reply seems to have been couched in a tone of apology, conscious of not having done strictly right, or as he emphatically expresses it, of the occasional "meanesses which poverty unavoidably brings with it." This seems not to have satisfied the creditor: he rejoined in a letter filled with reproaches of the most injurious nature, and finally threatened him with the utmost severity, as it would seem, of the law.

A second and very affecting letter from the accused has been preserved by the accuser, who never exhibited, and probably wished not to be known, what contains so strong a reflection on his moderation or humanity, and which is now for the first time made public. From this, the past and present necessities of poor Goldsmith appear to have been extreme, reaching nearly to the point of desperation; his mental anxieties no doubt aggravated by the recent disappointment. The original, now before the writer, is without date or place of residence, but endorsed by Griffiths, "Received in January, 1759."

"SIR,

"I know of no misery but a gaol to which my own imprudences and your letter seem to point. I have seen it inevitable these three or four weeks, and, by heavens! request it as a favour—as a favour that may prevent somewhat more fatal. I have been some years struggling with a wretched being—with all that contempt that indigence brings with it—with all those strong passions which make contempt insupportable. What, then, has a gaol that is formidable? I shall at least have the society of wretches, and such is, to me, true society. I tell you again and again, I am now neither able nor willing to pay you a farthing, but I will be punctual to any appointment you or the tailor shall make; thus far, at least, I do not act the sharper, since, unable to pay my debts one way, I would willingly

* These are, "Inquiries concerning the first Inhabitants, &c. of Europe;"—"Introduction to Languages;"—"Κεταλογία: sive Tragediarum Delectus;"—"Translation of Tully's Tusculan Disputations."

give some security another. No, Sir, had I been a sharper, had I been possessed of less good nature and native generosity, I might surely now have been in better circumstances.

"I am guilty, I own, of meannesses which poverty unavoidably brings with it: my reflections are filled with repentance for my imprudence, but not with any remorse for being a villain; that may be a character you unjustly charge me with. Your books, I can assure you, are neither pawned nor sold, but in the custody of a friend from whom my necessities obliged me to borrow some money: whatever becomes of my person, you shall have them in a month. It is very possible both the reports you have heard and your own suggestions may have brought you false information with respect to my character; it is very possible that the man whom you now regard with detestation may inwardly burn with grateful resentment. It is very possible that, upon a second perusal of the letter I sent you, you may see the workings of a mind strongly agitated with gratitude and jealousy. If such circumstances should appear, at least spare invective till my book with Mr. Dodsley shall be published, and then perhaps you may see the bright side of a mind, when my professions shall not appear the dictates of necessity, but of choice.

"You seem to think Dr. Milner knew me not. Perhaps so; but he was a man I shall ever honour; but I have friendships only with the dead! I ask pardon for taking up so much time; nor shall I add to it by any other professions than that I am,

"Sir, your humble servant,

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.*

"P.S. I shall expect impatiently the result of your resolutions."

The expressions, "I am now neither able nor willing to pay you a farthing," seem to imply either resentment at the terms applied to him, or that the demand was disputed; while the promise to "be punctual to any appointment you or the tailor shall make" shows at least anxiety to meet the difficulty in the most honourable manner. The dispute appears to have been settled for a time by a short compilation written by the Poet, and advertised for publication, as will appear, by Griffiths, in the following month (February;) but either this did not produce peace between the parties, or some new cause of quarrel arose. On the appearance of the Inquiry into Polite Learning, a few months afterwards, the writer who succeeded to Goldsmith's place in the Monthly Review, in addition to sharp literary strictures, breaks out into the following extreme personalities and imputations on private character:—

"It requires a great deal of art and temper for a man to write consistently against the dictates of his own heart. Thus, notwithstanding our author talks so familiarly of *us*, the great, and affects to be thought to stand in the rank of patrons, we cannot help think-

* From the MS. collection of the late Mr. Heber.

ing that in more places than one he has betrayed in himself the man he so severely condemns for drawing his quill to take a purse. We are even so firmly convinced of this, that we dare put the question home to his conscience, whether he never experienced the unhappy situation he so feelingly describes, in that of a literary understrapper? His remarking him as coming down from his garret to rummage the bookseller's shop for materials to work upon, and the knowledge he displays of his minutest labours, give great reason to suspect he may himself have had recourse to the bad trade of book-making. *Fronti nulla fides.* We have heard of many a writer who, 'patronized only by his bookseller,' has, nevertheless, affected the gentleman in print, and talked full as cavalierly as our author himself. We have even known one hardy enough publicly to stigmatize men of the first rank in literature for their immoralities,* while conscious himself of labouring under the infamy of having by the vilest and meanest actions, forfeited all pretensions to honour and honesty.

"If such men as these, boasting a liberal education and pretending to genius, practise at the same time those arts which bring the sharper to the cart's tail or the pillory, need our author wonder that 'learning partakes the contempt of its professors.'"

Several other innuendoes nearly as offensive and hypothetically conveyed, seem so far to exceed the latitude of public criticism or the private provocation given, as to occasion feelings of indignation in the reader. Tried by the standard of strict morality, it may be true that an offence, if so harsh a name be applicable to such an act in his situation, was committed; but looking to the attendant circumstances, which must ever influence our judgment in passing sentence upon all human creatures, it will appear to be of a venial character. Besides, the remembrance of former services, his connexion with the journal now made the vehicle of slander, the confession of its proprietor on other occasions that he was an ingenious, and the conviction which he must have felt of his being a distressed, man, ought to have withheld language which could be applied only to the worst characters in society.

One apology may be adduced for Griffiths, that the animadversions were not his own. They came, as he states, in a document already referred to of the writers in that work, from a person in his employ, afterwards known as a general libeller, whose characteristic virulence probably went beyond the instructions received. And so conscious was the former, whose general character exempts him from the charge of malignity, of the unwarrantable nature of the accusations, that shortly afterwards, in noticing another work, known to be by Goldsmith, *The Bee*, his traducer was desired to treat it in the most favourable manner in the Review. This, as may be supposed, did not satisfy the Poet: he retained a strong sense of the injury attempted to be inflicted on his moral character;

* A note is subjoined evidently aimed at Goldsmith:—"Even our author seems to have wandered from his subject into calumny, when, speaking of the Marquis D'Argens, he tells us 'he attempts to add the character of a philosopher, to the vices of a debauchee.'"

and several of his friends representing the gross nature of the attack the following denial, or retraction, of the meaning intended to be conveyed, appears in the month of June, 1762, in reviewing the *Citizen of the World* :—

“ Although the Chinese philosopher has nothing Asiatic about him, and is as errant a European as the philosopher of Malmesbury, yet he has some elegant remarks upon men, and manners, and things, as the phrase goes.

“ But the public have been already made sufficiently acquainted with the merit of these entertaining Letters, which were first printed in the Ledger, and are supposed to have contributed not a little towards the success of that paper. They are said to be the work of the lively and ingenious writer of an Inquiry into the present State of polite Learning in Europe ;—a writer whom it seems we undesignedly offended by some strictures on the conduct of many of our modern scribblers. As the observation was entirely general in its intention, we were surprised to hear that this gentleman had imagined himself in any degree pointed at, as we conceive nothing can be more illiberal in a writer, or more foreign to the character of a literary journal, than to descend to the meanness of personal reflection. It is hoped that a charge of this sort can never be justly brought against the *Monthly Review*.”

No good feeling was re-established between the parties, notwithstanding this attempt to explain away the offensive insinuations, nor is it believed they ever afterwards had intercourse ; Goldsmith never forgot the outrage, and Griffiths probably did not forgive him whom he had injured. As evidence of the hostility that continued to exist, it was remarked that in the *Review*, his productions, excepting his poems which all the world admired, usually experienced an unfavourable reception ; and a few months after the Poet's death, a charge of this kind was even advanced by more than one correspondent of that journal against its conductors. A reply to one of these accusers appeared in September, 1774 :—“ As to what this correspondent surmises of a prejudice against an old friend and associate, Dr. G., he may rest assured that there is no foundation for it. But it is ever our custom to be sparing of our compliments to each other.”

The writer of the libel in the *Review* was Kenrick, one of those unhappy persons who, with considerable talents, acquire notice chiefly by offences against good taste and moral propriety. A native of Hertfordshire, and brought up to a mechanical art, said to be that of a rule or scale maker, he deserted it with the view of pursuing literature as a profession. How he received his education is unknown ; the degree of LL. D. is believed to have come from a Scottish university. A love of notoriety, a jealous and perverse temper, increased often to violence by habits of intemperance, led him to assail all who enjoyed reputation, or whose success excited his envy, often avowedly as if courting a contest by reply, and never long affecting concealment. He was thus at war with nearly all his contemporaries : ‘ his hand was against every man ;’ and if

theirs was withheld from him, it arose from that impunity accorded to such as from want of principle and character become a species of privileged libellers. He was therefore rarely answered; but indeed this was scarcely necessary, for he frequently answered himself: the fact is well known with regard to some of his more serious productions; and in the search for materials for this work he has been frequently tracked in the periodical publications of the time, vituperating on one day the person whom he had lauded the preceding.

A graver charge than envy or jealousy—that of desperate malignity—applies to his conduct in 1772, when after having long flattered Garrick in order to secure the reception of his pieces on the stage, he turned upon him in consequence of a trifling disagreement with an infamous and unfounded charge connected with the retirement of Isaac Bickerstaffe from the country; and when proceedings were commenced against him in the Court of King's Bench, made at once the most abject submission and retraction. When afterwards asked by Evans the bookseller,* how he could bring so infamous a charge against Mr. Garrick? he replied, "he did not believe him guilty, but did it to plague the fellow." The honest bookseller observed, on telling the story when collecting the works of Goldsmith, "I desire to add, I never more conversed with such a man."

He wrote, and frequently with ability, upon a variety of subjects,—metaphysics, morality, poetry, the drama, satire, translation, lexicography, pamphlets on a variety of temporary topics; and for many years was a professional reviewer,—first in the *Monthly Review* from the termination of Goldsmith's engagement, whose place he appears to have filled immediately, till 1766; and in the *London Review*, which he established and conducted, from 1775 till his death in 1779. He gave lectures on Shakspeare; and conceiving he had discovered the perpetual motion, also upon natural philosophy. His chief poetical work, though nothing from his pen has survived himself, is "Epistles to Lorenzo," in the octo-syllabic measure, which are reputed to breathe a strain of infidelity; his best play is "Falstaff's Wedding," considered by some, perhaps from his own encomiums in the newspapers, a good imitation of Shakspeare, though represented only once or twice upon the stage. In 1765 he attacked Dr. Johnson's edition of Shakspeare, and very confidently told the public that the great critic knew "neither any one art nor any one language." Reply was beneath the dignity of the assailed, who was also displeased with a student of Oxford, one of his zealous admirers, for doing what he disdained to do for himself; but a sarcasm proved as effectual, and settled in a few words the station in society of the offender. When his works on one occasion were mentioned, Goldsmith said he had never heard of them, upon which Johnson observed, "Sir, he is one of the many

* Father of Mr. Evans, the respectable and well-known book auctioneer of Pall Mall.

who have made themselves *public*, without making themselves *known*." The general opinion of his literary brethren was pretty well expressed by Mr. Cuthbert Shaw, under the name of Mercurius Spur, in the poem of "The Race:"

"Dreaming of genius which he never had,
Half wit, half fool, half critic, and half mad;
Seizing, like Shirley, on the poet's lyre,
With all the rage, but not one spark of fire;
Eager for slaughter, and resolved to tear
From others' brows that wreath he must not wear,—
Next Kenrick came: all furious, and replete
With brandy, malice, pertness, and conceit;
Unskill'd in classic lore, through envy blind
To all that's beauteous, learned, or refined;
For faults alone behold the savage prowl,
With reason's offal glut his ravening soul:
Pleased with his prey, its inmost blood he drinks,
And mumbles, paws, and turns it—till it stinks."

The order of time has been in some degree anticipated by the consequences arising from the unlucky repulse of the Poet at Surgeon's Hall, which it has been remarked he studiously concealed from the knowledge of his friends. In the following letter to his brother, written at the period of the preceding dispute, the voyage is still mentioned as of probable accomplishment, though with an indifference that shows it occupied few of his thoughts; literary projects indeed, not professional pursuits or anticipations of Indian scenes or adventures, form its subject. The description of his own person and manners indicates little of the personal vanity of which he has been accused: the former is an accurate portrait: the latter by no means so true, being so far from the reserved and suspicious character he paints himself, that there were few whose mind and emotions were more on the surface of their general behaviour, excepting when at times depressed, or when soured by disappointments. He possessed no power of concealment, and suffered in the opinion of many by the want of that reserve in which he thought himself superabundant. This letter, though without date, was written early in February, 1759:—

"To the Reverend Henry Goldsmith, at Lowfield, near Ballymore, in Westmeath, Ireland.

"DEAR SIR,

"Your punctuality in answering a man whose trade is writing, is more than I had reason to expect; and yet you see me generally fill a whole sheet, which is all the recompence I can make for being so frequently troublesome. The behaviour of Mr. Mills and Mr. Lawder is a little extraordinary. However, their answering neither you nor me, is a sufficient indication of their disliking the employment which I assigned them. As their conduct is different from what I had expected, so I have made an alteration in mine. I shall, the beginning of next month, send over two hundred and fifty

books,* which are all that I fancy can be well sold among you, and I would have you make some distinction in the persons who have subscribed. The money, which will amount to sixty pounds, may be left with Mr. Bradley as soon as possible. I am not certain but I shall quickly have occasion for it.

"I have met with no disappointment with respect to my East India voyage, nor are my resolutions altered; though at the same time, I must confess, it gives me some pain to think I am almost beginning the world at the age of thirty-one. Though I never had a day's sickness since I saw you, yet I am not that strong active man you once knew me. You scarcely can conceive how much eight years† of disappointment, anguish, and study, have worn me down. If I remember right, you are seven or eight years older than me, yet I dare venture to say that if a stranger saw us both he would pay me the honours of seniority. Imagine to yourself a pale melancholy visage, with two great wrinkles between the eyebrows, with an eye disgustingly severe, and a big wig; and you may have a perfect picture of my present appearance. On the other hand, I conceive you as perfectly sleek and healthy, passing many a happy day among your own children, or those who knew you a child.

"Since I knew what it was to be a man, this is a pleasure I have not known. I have passed my days among a parcel of cool designing beings, and have contracted all their suspicious manner in my own behaviour. I should actually be as unfit for the society of my friends at home, as I detest that which I am obliged to partake of here. I can now neither partake of the pleasure of a revel, nor contribute to raise its jollity. I can neither laugh nor drink; have contracted a hesitating disagreeable manner of speaking, and a visage that looks ill-nature itself; in short, I have thought myself into a settled melancholy, and an utter disgust of all that life brings with it. Whence this romantic turn that all our family are possessed with? Whence this love for every place and every country but that in which we reside,—for every occupation but our own?—this desire of fortune, and yet this eagerness to dissipate? I perceive, my dear sir, that I am at intervals for indulging this splenetic manner, and following my own taste, regardless of yours.

"The reasons you have given me for breeding up your son a scholar are judicious and convincing; I should, however, be glad to know for what particular profession he is designed. If he be assiduous and divested of strong passions (for passions in youth always lead to pleasure,) he may do very well in your college; for it must be owned, that the industrious poor have good encouragement there, perhaps better than in any other in Europe. But if he has ambition,

* The Inquiry into Polite Literature. His previous remarks apply to the subscription.

† In this there seems to be an error; he had not quitted Ireland quite seven years, but he might not have seen his brother for some time previous to his departure. Precision in dates, however, was not then a virtue in Ireland. The alleged seniority of his brother also would appear to have been overstated.

strong passions, and an exquisite sensibility of contempt, do not send him there, unless you have no other trade for him but your own. It is impossible to conceive how much may be done by a proper education at home. A boy, for instance, who understands perfectly well Latin, French, arithmetic, and the principles of the civil law, and can write a fine hand, has an education that may qualify him for any undertaking; and these parts of learning should be carefully inculcated, let him be designed for whatever calling he will.

“Above all things, let him never touch a romance or novel: these paint beauty in colours more charming than nature, and describe happiness that man never tastes. How delusive, how destructive are those pictures of consummate bliss! They teach the youthful mind to sigh after beauty and happiness that never existed; to despise the little good which fortune has mixed in our cup, by expecting more than she ever gave; and in general, take the word of a man who has seen the world, and has studied human nature more by experience than precept—take my word for it, I say, that books teach us very little of the world. The greatest merit in a state of poverty would only serve to make the possessor ridiculous,—may distress but cannot relieve him.* Frugality, and even avarice, in the lower orders of mankind, are true ambition. These afford the only ladder for the poor to rise to preferment. Teach then, my dear Sir, to your son thrift and economy. Let his poor wandering uncle’s example be placed before his eyes. I had learned from books to be disinterested and generous, before I was taught from experience the necessity of being prudent. I had contracted the habits and notions of a philosopher, while I was exposing myself to the approaches of insidious cunning; and often by being, even with my narrow finances, charitable to excess, I forgot the rules of justice, and placed myself in the very situation of the wretch who thanked me for my bounty. When I am in the remotest part of the world, tell him this, and perhaps he may improve from my example. But I find myself again falling into my gloomy habits of thinking.

“My mother, I am informed, is almost blind; even though I had the utmost inclination to return home, under such circumstances I could not, for to behold her in distress without a capacity of relieving her from it would add too much to my splenetic habit. Your last letter was much too short; it should have answered some queries I had made in my former. Just sit down as I do, and write forward until you have filled all your paper. It requires no thought, at least from the ease with which my own sentiments rise when they are addressed to you. For, believe me, my head has no share in all I write; my heart dictates the whole. Pray, give my love to Bob Bryanton, and entreat him from me not to drink. My dear Sir, give me some account about poor Jenny.† Yet her husband loves her; if so, she cannot be unhappy.

* “Slow rises worth by poverty deprest.”

JOHNSON.

† His sister, Mrs. Johnston; her marriage, like that of Mrs. Hodson, was private, but in pecuniary matters much less fortunate.

"I know not whether I should tell you—yet why should I conceal these trifles, or indeed any thing from you? There is a book of mine will be published in a few days—the Life of a very extraordinary man; no less than the great Voltaire. You know already by the title that it is no more than a catch-penny. However, I spent but four weeks on the whole performance, for which I received twenty pounds. When published I shall take some method of conveying it to you, unless you may think it dear of the postage, which may amount to four or five shillings. However, I fear you will not find an equivalent of amusement.

"Your last letter, I repeat it, was too short; you should have given me your opinion of the design of the heroi-comical poem which I sent you. You remember I intended to introduce the hero of the poem as lying in a paltry ale house. You may take the following specimen of the manner, which I flatter myself is quite original. The room in which he lies may be described somewhat in this way:—

"The window, patch'd with paper, lent a ray
That feebly shew'd the state in which he lay:
The sanded floor that grits beneath the tread,
The humid wall with paltry pictures spread;
The game of goose was there expos'd to view,
And the twelve rules the royal martyr drew;
The Seasons, fram'd with listing, found a place,
And Prussia's monarch showed his lamp-black face.
The morn was cold; he views with keen desire
A rusty grate unconscious of a fire;
An unpaid reckoning on the frieze was scored,
And five crack'd teacups dress'd the chimney board."

"And now imagine after his soliloquy the landlord to make his appearance, in order to dun him for the reckoning:—

"Not with that face, so servile and so gay,
That welcomes every stranger that can pay:
With sulky eye he smoked the patient man,
Then pull'd his breeches tight, and thus began," &c.

"All this is taken, you see, from nature. It is a good remark of Montaign's, that the wisest men often have friends with whom they do not care how much they play the fool. Take my present follies as instances of my regard. Poetry is a much easier and more agreeable species of composition than prose; and could a man live by it, it were not unpleasant employment to be a poet. I am resolved to leave no space, though I should fill it up only by telling you, what you very well know already, I mean that

"I am

"Your most affectionate Friend and Brother,
"OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

We may be permitted to regret, from the specimen furnished of the intended poem, that a design so fitted for the display of his humour went no further. The subject appears to be as he thinks, ori-

ginal, and unhappy experience in all probability, had enabled him to give the details as he says "from nature;" for there is an air of verisimilitude about the scene that renders it difficult to believe it was not one he had known by experience. With a few additions, the lines are introduced in the account of a club of authors in the *Citizen of the World*; and but for having thus been used in a previous work, would, no doubt, have been applied in detail to the description of the alehouse in the *Deserted Village*, a hint or two only being now retained in that poem.

The other production mentioned with a degree of coyness in this letter,—the *Life of Voltaire*,—completed within a period of four weeks, as he informs us, and acknowledged as a sacrifice to necessity, would appear to be that already alluded to, with which he intended to repay Griffiths for the apparel, the subject of dispute, by the following announcement in the *Public Advertiser*, 7th February, 1759:—"Speedily will be published, *Memoirs of the Life of Monsieur de Voltaire*; with *Critical Observations on the Writings of that celebrated Poet*, and a new *Translation of the Henriade*. Printed for R. Griffiths, in Paternoster Row."

This seems a solitary advertisement, no other having been found. And notwithstanding every diligence on the part of those most accustomed to such inquiries, it has not been discovered as a separate work; but after a long search the writer found it printed in detached portions of the *Lady's Magazine* for 1761.

Of the general character of this piece little need be said. What he so lightly estimated himself cannot be highly valued by others in consequence of its deficiency in facts; but the reflections and style possess his accustomed qualities of elegance and vivacity. Considered as an exercise, though a slight one, of his pen, it will interest the literary inquirer; and as it is not likely to be published at length and indeed is not to be found, such passages as admit of being detached from the narrative will find admission in another place. The first paragraph, varied slightly in expression, is in thought similar to that which introduces the memoir of Parnell. "That life which has been wholly employed in the study, is properly seen only in the author's writings; there is no variety to entertain, nor adventure to interest us in the calm anecdotes of such an existence. Cold criticism is all the reader must expect, instead of instructive history."

The version of the *Henriade* to which it was meant to form an introduction was again announced singly, in April*; but like the *Life*, this form of publication seems to have been abandoned by the publisher. It is to be found, however, where he probably thought it more immediately useful, in his *Magazine (the Grand)* for September 1759, a book of the poem being published in each succeeding number, and is there stated to be for the first time rendered into English. Goldsmith is believed to have had little more to do with it than the

* "Next month will be published, elegantly printed in one pocket volume, *The Henriade, an Heroic Poem*. By Mons. Voltaire. Translated into English verse. Printed for R. Griffiths, in Paternoster Row."—*Public Advertiser*, April 22, 1759.

revision and correction, which a correct taste for poetry and friendship towards the translator, an unhappy follower of letters, might supply.

This person is said to have been Edward Purdon, an old college friend* and like himself, the son of a clergyman. Being of a thoughtless turn and dissipated habits, he enlisted as a private soldier after quitting the University; but becoming tired of this mode of life, he procured his discharge, commenced professional writer in London, and renewed his acquaintance with Goldsmith, of whose bounty he frequently partook, and is believed to have been the cause of some of the difficulties and imprudences of his good-natured friend. Not destitute of talents, a necessitous life and ill-regulated passions interfered with their reputable exertion. Poverty long continued, particularly in those who have known a contrary lot, too often begets disregard of intellectual as well as of moral pre-eminence; and he who under favourable circumstances might acquire fame, when pursued by want cannot always become even respectable. He produced nothing therefore worth remembering. Compelled to have recourse to such fleeting topics as promised immediate subsistence, he seems, except in the instance of this translation, never to have ascended above petty pamphlets, contributions to periodical works and newspapers, and that never-failing topic for all writers good and bad—the theatre. For an abusive pamphlet against the performers of Drury Lane, particularly Mossop, he was obliged to make an abject apology, to which was subjoined another from his publisher, Pottinger, who pleaded ignorance of its contents, which appeared in the London Chronicle, Oct. 13—15, 1759.

A life such as this, where the labour is great, the reward little, and the reputation more than questionable, seems the consummation of human misery; yet how often is it embraced in the first glow of youthful hope or ambition by such as have or have not qualifications for the pursuit, in the forlorn hope of acquiring distinction! Relieved frequently by Goldsmith when denial would have been no more than prudence to himself, Purdon was long known as one of his pensioners; he saw much of his benefactor, was not ungrateful for the assistance rendered, and related many anecdotes of him, of which a few only have travelled down to us, preserved by casual auditors. He died as he had lived,—in penury; and it was, perhaps, with reference to him and others whom he avows to have known in the same unfortunate situation, and it is to be feared with the remembrance of some sufferings of his own, that we find the following passage on the effects of hunger in “Animated Nature:”—“The lower race of animals, when satisfied for the instant moment, are perfectly happy; but it is otherwise with man: his mind anticipates distress, and feels the pangs of want even before it arrests him. Thus the mind being continually harassed by the situation, it at length influ-

* “1744, Julii 28^o—*Edwardus Purdon Pens—Filius Edwardi Clerici.—Annum agens 15—Natus in Comitatu Limerick—Educatus sub ferula Ma: Jessop—Tutor Mr. Holt.*”

ences the constitution, and unfits it for all its functions. Some cruel disorder, but no way like hunger, seizes the unhappy sufferer; so that almost all those men who have thus long lived by chance, and whose every day may be considered as a happy escape from famine, are known at last to die in reality of a disorder caused by hunger, but which, in common language, is often called a broken heart. *Some of these I have known myself when very little able to relieve them.*"

To the unhappy existence of this poor man more direct allusion is made in the well-known epitaph on him, in his poetical works, paltry taken from the French, in which notwithstanding the smile created by its point, there is something of tenderness for an old acquaintance."

Toward the end of March, 1759, was published, for the Dodsleys, the piece from which a portion of fame and money were expected to accrue, "An Inquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning in Europe." No reasonable means were neglected to make it known through the usual channels. The first announcement appears in the London Chronicle newspaper, April 3—5, and repeated in the Public Advertiser soon afterwards, April 26—28. An extract occupying six columns was given in the former. A long letter from a correspondent, directing attention to the work, found place in the Gentleman's Magazine, followed by a favourable, though not indiscriminately laudatory, notice in the Critical Review for April; while in the Annual Register, commenced and conducted by Burke for the first seven years, it is likewise mentioned with approbation.

Thus introduced, and showing proofs of coming from a man of genius and considerable observation and learning, it was favourably received. The style has all his characteristic perspicuity; more terse, perhaps, and epigrammatic than his other writings,—qualities which, while they give pungency to a sentence, impart something of the appearance of labour. It is, however, free from stiffness. But the promise of the title-page appeared obviously of a nature too extensive for any one man, however high his attainments or numerous his opportunities for observation, to treat in a satisfactory manner. The means and the leisure of Goldsmith were certainly inadequate to the purpose. He had enjoyed the advantage, indeed, of seeing France, Germany, and Italy, in his tour; but under circumstances not favourable to research, or for adequate acquaintance with their men of letters, and for a period too short for any diligence to acquire the requisite information by personal inquiry.

Polite literature, unlike science, has not the same fixed principles in every country. The progress or limits of mathematics or of astronomy, of chemistry or of the branches of natural philosophy in one kingdom may be investigated by the native of another competently informed, with the certainty of arriving at pretty accurate conclusions. But the state of Polite Letters is more variable and to be very differently estimated, for scarcely any two nations possess precisely similar standards of taste. Thus, France and England differ widely in their estimate of poetry and the drama, and quite as much so perhaps, in the arts of design. We cannot procure Shakspeare and Milton to be received with all the consideration due to their ex-

traordinary powers, in France; and in return, we scarcely allow that country to possess any poetry except dramatic, of a high order. It requires therefore, not merely an intimate acquaintance with the language and history, but with the genius, manners, opinions, prejudices, and local peculiarities of a people, for a foreigner to enter upon the consideration of their polite literature, in order to appreciate it thoroughly or to decide upon it justly. To attempt to do, therefore, for all Europe what is so difficult to perform for one of its states, nay, what few writers can successfully accomplish for their own country, presented obstacles which no individual could expect to overcome. The title adopted on the occasion, implying a range which could not be taken in a duodecimo, was perhaps not judiciously chosen. But the spirit of the remarks, the information although more limited than we desire, and the ingenuity of his views, render the work as coming from his pen worthy of perusal.

Its weaker points were a somewhat affected, for it could scarcely be real, depreciation of science; some contradictions; a few paradoxes and novelties, advanced probably with the design of provoking discussion or drawing attention to the book, although such motives are expressly disclaimed.

"Dissenting from received opinions may frequently render this essay liable to correction; yet the reader may be assured that a passion for singularity never gives rise to the error. Novelty is not permitted to usurp the place of reason."—Remembering, however, the humorous account given by George Primrose of the supposed publication of his paradoxes, and of the disappointment experienced by their being unnoticed, it is difficult to believe that Goldsmith did not shadow out himself in the hero of the tale, when the latter is made to describe himself as full of importance and expecting the "whole learned world to rise and oppose them, but then he was ready to oppose the whole learned world;" but the learned said nothing about him or his paradoxes, and he "suffered the cruellest mortification, neglect."*

One of the positions strenuously maintained in this work says little for the merit of the employment of which he had now sufficient experience, that of a professional reviewer. He estimates criticism and the increase of critics and commentators as indicative of the decay of polite letters. "Learning may be distinguished into three periods. Its commencement, or the age of poets; its maturity, or the age of philosophers; and its decline, or the age of critics." "When polite learning was no more, then it was those literary lawgivers made the most formidable appearance. *Corruptissima republica plurimæ leges.*"—"Wherever the poet was permitted to improve his native language, polite learning flourished; where the critic undertook the same task, it never rose to any degree of perfection."

"Other depravations," he continues, "in the republic of letters, such as affectation in some popular writers leading others into vicious imitation; political struggles in the state; a depravity of morals

* Vicar of Wakefield, chap. xx.

among the people; ill directed encouragement or no encouragement from the great: these have been often found to co-operate in the decline of literature; but an increase of criticism has always portended a decay.* It may be remarked that Dr. Johnson, though so eminent in the art, when he condescended to exercise it, which was not often, speaks in a strain scarcely more favourable of "the disquisitions of criticism, which, in my opinion, is only to be ranked among the subordinate and instrumental arts."†

This opinion is no doubt true; for though good criticism requires talent, it is talent of a secondary order. Great critics indeed, such as Johnson himself, like great writers, are rare; but for every purpose of instruction or amusement, for the original ideas thrown out, or developement of the subject in hand, the best periodical critic is inferior to an original writer even of a middling order; for the latter must give much time and consideration to matters on which the former commonly can bestow little; no reader of taste will take up a commentary, who can refer to the original. Whether the opinion of Goldsmith be correct that the increase of critics, fearful beyond all precedent in our own day, indicates the decline of letters, may be doubted: they are but the shadows of authors, and as naturally follow the substance from which they emanate and of whose existence they furnish evidence. But from the numbers daily starting into existence in every shape and place, inexperienced in life, in letters, and often in judgment, it would seem as if the calling required a very moderate portion of ingenuity, and were pursued rather by the journeymen of Genius than by Genius herself. Writers of very original powers cannot long pursue such an occupation solely; like him indeed, whose opinions are here adduced, they may be compelled to the task for a time by necessity, or when entering upon a literary career in order to learn the mere mechanical parts of the art; but it soon becomes irksome, and we gladly fly from examination of the ideas of other men to the more grateful exercise of our own.‡

One of the inconveniences of poverty, besides its positive privations, is not only the bar thrown in our way to pursue the path we wish, but the frequent necessity of adopting that which we dislike. Thus, the wayward fate of Goldsmith seemed constantly to thwart the bent of his inclinations as well in life as in letters. It caused him to enter the university in a situation he disliked if not despised; it made him a traveller on foot through Europe when his ambition was

* Inquiry into Polite Learning, Works, vol. i.

† See last number of the Rambler.

‡ A passage in the "Inquiry into Polite Learning" seems to have given origin to a celebrated simile in the Letters of Junius, applied by that writer to the Duke of Grafton, when he says of Lord Chatham, "after going through all the resolutions of political chemistry, he has arrived at the *caput mortuum* of vitriol in your Grace." — Goldsmith says, speaking of the difficulties of introducing a play upon the stage, "Our poet's performances must undergo a process truly chemical before it is presented to the public. It must be tried in the manager's fire, strained through a licenser, and purified in the review of the newspaper of the day. At this rate, before it can come to a private table, it may probably be a mere *caput mortuum*, and only proper entertainment for the licenser, manager, or critic himself."

to seem of consequence; and usher at a school, when detesting the employment; and the frequent companion of persons whom he avowedly despised, and from whose society he wished to escape. At a future period it compelled him in great measure to desist from the cultivation of poetry, in which he delighted; to become the writer of histories which however popular and excellent of their class, he never thought conducive to his fame; of other compilations he did not think proper to own; and at this moment, while condemning criticism as the bane of polite letters, forced him, in order to earn a scanty subsistence, to pursue the very occupation he stigmatised, that of a professional critic.

Among the persons connected with literature to whom he became known some time in the year 1758, was Mr. Archibald Hamilton, printer of the *Critical Review*, who saw so much in him to esteem as a man and to admire as a writer, that he became one of his firmest friends. He invited him to his house in the vicinity of Chelsea, where the daughter of this gentleman remembered to have seen him frequently, relieved him subsequently from occasional pecuniary difficulties, and willing to gain all the talent he could for the journal with which he was connected, is said to have been the first to introduce him to Dr. Smollett, then its principal editor. There was likewise some policy in the measure; he was known as an ally of Griffiths, and a violent hostility existing between the rival reviews, it was a means of weakening the enemy.

The precise period at which he commenced contributor to this work is uncertain; not later certainly than January, 1759, for in that month appear two of the articles traced to him, reviews of Marriott's *Female Conduct*, a poem, and Barrett's translation of Ovid's *Epistles*. These, with several others, and a variety of his unacknowledged essays, were collected by Mr. Thomas Wright, printer, to whom allusion has been made, then pursuing his business with Hamilton, and published under the superintendence of Isaac Reed. The other articles contained in this work are on Butler's *Remains*, by R. Thyer of Manchester; Marriott's twentieth *Epistle of Horace modernized*; Massinger's *Works*,—in July; on Goddard's *Translation of Guicciardini's History of Italy*; *Works of Mr. W. Hawkins*; *Jemima and Louisa*, a novel,—in August; continuation of the paper on Butler's *Remains*,—in September; on Dunkin's *Epistle to the Earl of Chesterfield*; and a rejoinder to the answer of Mr. Hawkins on the previous notice of his works,—in March, 1760.

In this selection, which from internal evidence is correct as far as it goes, it will be observed there is a blank between the months of January and July, yet as his necessities were urgent and no other literary employment can be traced to him at this time, we may be assured he was not idle. Close examination of the *Review* will enable us to supply the chasm. Criticism indeed cannot always be certainly traced to the actual writer; but when he is known to have contributed to a work without fixed purpose of concealment, and where in conjunction with style generally we find his favourite

phrases, allusions and even sentiments as seen not in one but several of his writings, there will be little difficulty in fixing the authorship with a great degree of precision. Taking these for our guide, among other papers which are doubtful, and therefore not noticed here, the following appear certainly to be his: on Church's edition of Spenser, in the February number; Langhorne's translation of the Death of Adonis, and the foreign article, in March; Ward's Oration, in April; the Orphan of China, in May; Dr. Young's Conjectures on Original Composition, Formey's Philosophical Miscellanies, Van Egmont's and Heyman's Travels through Parts of Europe and Asia Minor, Montesquieu's Miscellaneous Pieces,—in June.

It would be tedious to enumerate the minute species of evidence serving to identify each; an editor, in the close and laborious examination incumbent upon him to make of the writing of his principal, will discover much that must escape the notice of the casual reader; but as a specimen of the identity of thought and language employed, the following passage is given from the review of Van Egmont's and Heyman's travels. It relates to a favourite project of the critic himself; that of penetrating into parts of Asia, and bringing back the knowledge of such useful arts as are familiar to its natives, though unknown in Europe. This design as we well know occupied his mind for several years, looking forward to some favourable period for its accomplishment which never occurred, or offered only when it was inexpedient to be pursued. Toward the end of 1761, or commencement of the following year as will be noticed, he drew up a memorial on the subject to government; a paper likewise containing the substance and even the words of the following passage was printed by him about the same time in the Public Ledger; he afterwards shaped it into the 108th letter of the Citizen of the World; and still retaining the same favourite idea, again republished it in the volume of Essays (No. xviii.) in 1765.

"One who sits down to read the accounts of modern travellers into Asia, will be apt to fancy that they all travelled in the same track. Their curiosity seems repressed either by fear or indolence, and all are contented if they venture as far as others went before them. Thus, the same cities, towns, ruins, and rivers, are again described to a disgusting repetition. Thus, a man shall go a hundred miles to admire a mountain, only because it was spoken of in Scripture; yet what information can be received from hearing that Agidius Van Egmont went up such a hill only to come down again? Could we see a man set out upon this journey, not with an intent to consider rocks and rivers, but the manners and mechanic inventions, and the imperfect learning of the inhabitants, resolved to penetrate into countries as yet little known, and eager to pry into all their secrets, with a heart not terrified at trifling dangers; if there could be found a man who could unite thus true courage with sound learning, from such a character we might expect much information. Even though what he should bring home was only the manner of dying red in the Turkish manner, his labours would be more bene-

ficial to society, than if he had collected all the mutilated inscriptions and idle shells on the coasts of the Levant.”*

Another of his supposed contributions to the Review is not so well ascertained. From a memorandum of Isaac Reed, prefixed to a manuscript of Goldsmith in the possession of the writer and hereafter to be mentioned, it appears that the latter took part with Smollett in the warfare between him and Grainger relative to the translation of Tibullus, and wrote a defence of him on that occasion. The following is the note:—

“This MS. is one of the productions of, and in the hand-writing of Dr. Goldsmith. It was given to me by Mr. Steevens, who received it from Hamilton, the printer. He had also another MS. by the Doctor, a defence of Dr. Smollett against Dr. Grainger’s attack on him relative to the criticism on Tibullus in the Critical Review. This last I think Mr. Steevens gave to Mr. Beauclerk.”

This piece, though probably still in existence, has not been discovered. It was no doubt written for the Review, but whether published cannot be certainly known until found and compared with the article in that journal for February 1759, which forms Smollett’s defence, and where Grainger’s intemperate and extremely personal reply to the supposed criticism of Smollett on his translation in the previous December, is answered in a manner scarcely less vituperative.†

* A portion of the paper in the Ledger, which is merely an expansion of the above passage in the Review, is subjoined for the satisfaction of the reader:

“I have frequently been amazed at the ignorance of almost all the European travellers who have penetrated any considerable way eastward into Asia. They have all been influenced by motives of commerce or piety, and their accounts are such as might reasonably be expected from men of a very narrow or very prejudiced education, the dictates of superstition, or the result of ignorance. Is it not surprising that, in such a variety of adventurers, not one single philosopher should be found among the number?

“There is scarcely any country, how rude or uncultivated soever, where the inhabitants are not possessed of some peculiar secrets, either in nature or art, which might be transplanted with success: thus in Siberian Tartary the natives extract a strong spirit from milk, which is a secret probably unknown to the chemists of Europe. In the most savage parts of India they are possessed of the secret of dying vegetable substances scarlet; and that of refining lead into a metal which, for hardness and colour, is little inferior to silver. * * *

“I never consider this subject without being surprised that none of those societies so laudably established in England for the promotion of arts and learning have never thought of sending one of their members into the most eastern parts of Asia, to make what discoveries he was able. * * *

“The only difficulty would remain in choosing a proper person for so arduous an enterprise. He should be a man of philosophical turn, one apt to deduce consequences of general utility from particular occurrences; neither swoln with pride nor hardened by prejudice; neither wedded to one particular system, nor instructed only in one particular science; neither wholly a botanist nor quite an antiquarian: his mind should be tintured with miscellaneous knowledge, and his manners humanized by an intercourse with men. He should be in some measure an enthusiast to the design; fond of travelling, from a rapid imagination and an innate love of change; furnished with a body capable of sustaining every fatigue, and a heart not easily terrified at danger.”

† The spirit in which this quarrel was conducted will be seen from the following extracts. The first is from the conclusion of the Review of Goldsmith’s Inquiry into Polite Learning.

“N.B. We must observe that, against his own conviction, this author has indis-

Sixteen pages of the Review are occupied by this paper, which from its tone and language is not likely to be wholly, if at all, from the pen of Goldsmith, or if so, it is unlike any thing else from the same source. Smollett, in return to a personal attack, would no doubt trust only to himself for a vindication. But as Goldsmith also appears from the preceding memorandum to have written something in defence of his coadjutor to whom he was probably under obligations, the former may have embodied in the reply such parts of this paper as related to the merely literary demerits of the work under consideration; errors of fact, mistranslation, omissions, and defective or inharmonious lines; for in these respects, his judgment was fully appreciated, his department in both Reviews being classical literature, poetry, the drama, and polite literature generally. There were few of his contemporaries who brought to such subjects more correct taste, or discriminating judgment.

CHAPTER IX.

Residence in Green-Arbour Court.—The Bee.—Busy Body.—Lady's Magazine.—Newbery the bookseller.—Notes of Dr. Johnson.—Smollett.—British Magazine.

His residence at this period was on the first floor of the house, No. 12, Green-Arbour Court, between the Old Bailey and what was lately Fleet Market. Here he took up his abode toward the end of 1758; the spot was central, in the immediate vicinity of the booksellers, now his chief or only employers, and here he became well known to his literary brethren, was visited by them, and his lodgings well remembered.

This house a few years ago formed the abode, as it appears to

criminally censured the two Reviews, confounding a work undertaken from public spirit (meaning the Critical) with one supported for the sordid purposes of a bookseller. It might not become us to say more on this subject."

"Whereas one of the owls belonging to the proprietor of the M—thly R—w which answers to the name of Grainger, hath suddenly broke from his mew, where he used to hoot in darkness and peace, and now screeches openly in the face of day, we shall take the first opportunity to chastise this troublesome owl, and drive him back to his original obscurity."

Note to the Critical Rev. Jan. 1759.

This is beneath the dignity of literary contest, if enraged authors at such moments could remember that they have something to lose in public opinion by unseen exhibitions of temper. Smollett, however, was not without cause of complaint against the rival journal. His "Reprisal, or Tars of Old England," is thus characterized in the Monthly Review for February, 1757:—"Calculated for the meridian of Bartholomew Fair; but by some unnatural accident (as jarring elements are sometimes made to unite) exhibited eight nights at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane."

have done in his own time, of laborious indigence. The adjoining houses likewise presented every appearance of squalid poverty, every floor being occupied by the poorest class; two of the number fell down from age and delapidation; and the remainder on the same side of the court, including that in which the Poet resided standing in the right-hand corner on entering from Farringdon Street by what is called from their steepness and number Break-neck Steps, were taken down some time afterwards to avoid a similar catastrophe. They were four stories in height; the attics had casement windows, and at one time they were probably inhabited by a superior class of tenants. The site is now occupied by a large building, enclosed by a wall running through the court or square, intended for the stabling and lofts of a wagon-office.

Several intimate associates at this time remembered and repeated after his death, that while here he had formed the strictest resolutions of future economy. His letters to Ireland, and occasional essays written at this time and in these apartments, impress as we have seen in a preceding page, in the strongest manner the virtues of prudence; and the same friends stated, that for a time he permitted these lessons to influence his conduct. It may be true he had not much to spend; but imprudence may be as marked in the disbursements of a small income as a great; penury and carelessness in the majority of minds, act and re-act in producing each other; and as this seems to have been his own case, he was willing to try what could be done in shaking off two such inconvenient companions. No keen observer in human life, such as he was, could doubt the truth of his prudential maxims, though many persons, and he himself among the number, not only proud but very sensitive to the contempt which penury brings with it, fail to adopt the obvious remedy for their misfortune by becoming economical; and it is said that Goldsmith, however bent on improving his condition, could not long withstand solicitations for such small sums as he possessed, by men still poorer and more distressed than himself.

In the beginning of March, 1759, he was seen here, in one of his excursions to London, by the Rev. Mr. Percy, who frequently repeated the anecdote of the visit in conversation, though disinclined to let his name appear as the relater in print.* His situation seems to have been far from enviable; but as that gentleman justly observed, the circumstances in which he was found, so far from being discreditable in itself, furnished the best evidence of the possession of powers, the unassisted exercise of which elevated him from so

* Dr. Campbell thus writes to the Bishop, June 30, 1790:—"Your anecdotes will embellish my paper highly; and your picture of *Green-Arbour Court* shall be closely copied;—as to the rest, my account of your visit to him there was almost verbatim from my recollection of your words, which you have set down in your last. But could there be any harm in letting the world know who the visitant was? Without the circumstance of the dignity of the guest, the contrast will be in a great measure lost, and the matter will lose its grand authority as to the fact. But in this, as in every thing else, your wish shall be a command."

unpromising a condition to the enjoyment of all the elegances of life, and admission to the first societies in London.

"The Doctor," observed that prelates, "was employed in writing his Inquiry into Polite Learning" (or rather, perhaps, in correcting the proof-sheets, for the work, as already noticed, appeared on the 3d of April following,) in a wretchedly dirty room, in which there was but one chair, and when, from civility, this was offered to his visitant, he himself was obliged to sit in the window. While they were conversing some one gently rapped at the door, and on being desired to come in, a poor ragged little girl of very decent behaviour entered, who, dropping a courtesy, said, "My mamma sends her compliments, and begs the favour of you to lend her a chamber-pot full of coals."

To the few notices gleaned of him while in these lodgings, accident has enabled the writer to make some additions from a quarter seemingly authentic. In the year 1820, long before any thought of this biography was entertained, entering a small shop of miscellaneous articles in the Clapham-road, in order to purchase the first edition (1765) of his Essays lying in the window, the owner, a fresh-looking woman between sixty and seventy, in opening the volume, made a variety of affectionate encomiums on his kindness and charity to others when labouring under difficulties himself, intimating at the same time her personal knowledge of the persons befriended. Curiosity thus excited occasioned inquiry, and this person whose features and shop, though not her name, are well remembered, communicated all she professed to recollect.

By her account she was a near relative of the woman who kept the house in Green-Arbour Court, and at the age of seven or eight years went frequently thither, one of the inducements to which was the cakes and sweetmeats given to her and other children of the family by the gentleman who lodged there; these they duly valued at the moment, but when afterwards considered as the gifts of one so eminent, the recollection became a source of pride and boast. Another of his amusements consisted in assembling these children in his room, and inducing them to dance to the music of his flute. Of this instrument, as a favourite relaxation from study, he was fond. He was usually, as she subsequently heard when older and induced to inquire more about him, shut up in the room during the day, went out in the evenings, and preserved regular hours. His habits otherwise were sociable, and he had several visitors. One of the companions, whose society gave him particular pleasure, was a respectable watchmaker residing in the same court, celebrated for the possession of much wit and humour,* qualities which as they distinguish his own writings, he professes to have sought and cultivated wherever they were to be found. His benevolence as usual, flowed freely, according to my informant, whenever he

* It is some corroboration of this person's account, that, in searching the newspapers and periodical works of that day, the writer met some where with the obituary of a person of this description who resided in Green-Arbour Court.

had any thing to bestow, and even when he had not, the stream could not always be checked in its current; an instance of which tells highly to his honour. The landlord of the house having fallen into difficulties was at length arrested; and Goldsmith, who owed a small sum for rent, being applied to by his wife, to assist in the release of her husband, found that, although without money, he did not want resources; a new suit of clothes was consigned to the pawnbroker, and the amount raised, proving much more than sufficient to discharge his own debt, was handed over for the release of the prisoner. It would be a singular though not an improbable coincidence if this story, repeated to the writer by the descendant of a person who afterwards became his tailor, and who knew not that it had been previously told, should apply to that identical suit of apparel for which he incurred so much odium and abuse from Griffiths; and that an effort of active benevolence to relieve a debtor from gaol, should have given rise to a charge against him resembling dishonesty. The quarrel appears to have occurred about the period in question.

Another anecdote partakes more of the ludicrous. A gentleman inquiring whether he was within was shown up to his room without further ceremony, when soon after having entered it, a noise of voices as if in altercation was heard by the people below, the key of the door at the same moment being turned within the room. Doubtful of the nature of the interview, the attention of the landlady for a moment turned toward the apartment of her lodger, but both voices being distinguished at intervals, her suspicions of personal violence were lulled, and no further notice taken. Late in the evening the door was unlocked, a good supper ordered by the visiter from a neighbouring tavern, and the gentlemen who met so ungraciously at first, spent the remainder of the evening in great good humour. The explanation given of this scene was, that the Poet being behind-hand with certain writings for the press, and the stated period of publication nearly arrived, the intruder who was a printer or publisher, possibly Hamilton or Wilkie for both of whom he wrote at the time, finding them in a backward state, would not quit the room till they were finished; and for this species of durance inflicted upon the author, the supper formed the apology.

In these apartments, little indebted as we may believe to the labours of the housemaid, he is said to have observed the habits and predatory life of the spider, and drawn up that paper on the subject, which appears in the fourth number of the Bee, is reprinted in the Essays, and given in substance in the History of Animated Nature. In his musing moods the confined nature of his abode offered few external objects to contemplate. The necessity for almost constant labour to supply the press made him in some measure a prisoner, and persons so placed have often found interest or amusement in contemplating the lower order of created beings. There is a vacuum in the mind in such situations which something must supply; and when greater objects are wanting, we seize upon the less. The creature, while it instructed him in the habits of its species, offered

some novelty to the readers of his paper (the Bee); and an insignificant circumstance was thus dexterously converted into an amusing communication on a point of natural history.

At this period probably his pen had not attained that rapidity it subsequently acquired; and having early possessed the laudable ambition of writing well rather than quickly, the aim of excellence in the eyes of those who wanted quantity found no great favour; and to this we may in part attribute the visit of the printer to his lodgings, the disconnexion with Griffiths, and disagreements possibly with others of his magazine patrons. There will be always room for complaint against him who contracts to furnish a given quantity of mental labour within a given time; circumstances, in spite of even dogged determination to the contrary, continually make him in arrear, and however he may promise punctuality and conscientiously mean to fulfil the engagement, he can rarely insure it. The work of the hand alone, is mechanical and therefore certain; that of the mind can scarcely be otherwise than variable. Tracing some of the epochs and circumstances of his life in his writings, his situation now seems exactly and minutely described in a passage put into the mouth of the Vicar of Wakefield's son. The allusions to having made one attempt for fame, meaning the Inquiry into Polite Learning—to his being obliged afterwards to write for bread—to his passion for applause—to his efforts at acquiring an elegant style—all are so applicable as to admit of no mistake; and the concluding complaint of the fate of his pieces is in nearly the precise words used in the preface to the Essays on their subsequent republication when embodied into a volume.

"Having a mind too proud" (George Primrose is made to say) "to stoop to such indignities (that of obtaining subscriptions for books not meant to be published,) and yet a fortune too humble to hazard a second attempt for fame, I was now obliged to take a middle course, and write for bread. But I was unqualified for a profession where mere industry alone was to insure success. I could not suppress my lurking passion for applause, but usually consumed that time in efforts after excellence which takes up but little room, when it should have been more advantageously employed in the diffusive productions of fruitful mediocrity. My little piece would therefore come forth in the midst of periodical publications, unnoticed and unknown. The public were more importantly employed, than to observe the easy simplicity of my style, or the harmony of my periods. Sheet after sheet was thrown off to oblivion. My essays were buried among essays upon liberty, eastern tales, and cures for the bite of a mad dog; while Philautos, Philaethes, Philelutheros, and Philanthropos, all wrote better, because they wrote faster than I."

From the previous notice of his labours in criticism, it would seem that his contributions to the Critical Review ceased for a time about September 1759.* The cause appears to have been engagements in

* This is to be understood only of the moment: little doubt exists that he was an occasional contributor to that journal for some years afterward.

three periodical works nearly at the same moment; *The Bee*, *The Busy Body*, and the *Lady's Magazine*; glad perhaps to escape from reviewing to original composition, as a source, if not of greater emolument, at least of probable fame and more agreeable employment.

The Bee, a collection of essays, published weekly by Wilkie, price three-pence, and to which he furnished all the papers of value, appeared on the 6th of October 1759, with the motto from Lucretius—

“*Floriferis ut apes saltibus omnia libant
Omnia nos itidem.*”

It proceeded as far as the eighth number (24th November,) and then from the want of that encouragement hinted by the author or publisher in the newspapers,* and which in the fourth number is perhaps injudiciously for the success of the work, however humorously proclaimed, ceased. The papers exhibited no want of variety or of excellence, but there is a fortune in small things as in great.

He is said to have had associates in this undertaking, which however applies with more probability to the *Lady's Magazine*, issuing at the same moment from the same publisher, and likewise indebted to his pen. If he really received aid, it seems to have been confined to a few selections, such as those already mentioned from the *Literary Magazine* (if these indeed be not reclamations of his own offspring,) and three or four short pieces from Voltaire and others. All the leading papers, such as were expected to give character and popularity to the work, bear sufficient testimony to the hand of Goldsmith. They evince all his playful genius, vivacity, and observation on life, are drawn up with some care, and furnish evidence of his having thought attentively on several of the subjects. The paper on education anticipated many of the sentiments of Rousseau; and that on eloquence supplies useful hints to English divines on the oratory of the pulpit, which he justly remarks has not received that attention in our country that it deserves. There are fewer subjects of mere humour than in his subsequent essays.

The discontent jocularly expressed at the cool reception experienced by the *Bee* from the public, was not unreasonable: the pieces rose afterwards in estimation as their author became known by more important works; were copied into numerous contemporary publications; were admired as ingenious and amusing; and had become ere this a source sometimes of reputation, sometimes of profit, to all but their author; adding another instance to the many, that the world seldom agrees to applaud small things however well done, except when executed by such as have shown themselves capable of doing greater. To give the work the chance of escape from oblivion, and a less perishable form, the numbers were collected and republished by the Dodsleys in the middle of December 1759; and

* This, and the prospectus of the work, will be found in the first volume of his Works.

several of the best appeared in the volume of *Essays* printed in 1765.

Anxious as he may be supposed for the success of the paper, it argues no inconsiderable fertility to find him contributing to others. On the 9th of October, three days only after the appearance of the first number of *The Bee*, came out "*The Busy Body*;" a periodical paper, something on the plan though larger in form, of the older essayists, published by Pottinger, price two-pence, and to appear every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. To this Goldsmith contributed (Oct. 13th) the third paper "*On the Clubs of London*," afterwards republished by himself in his *Essays*. Part of the fifth number is likewise his, namely, that poem inserted in his works and said to be written "in the manner of Swift," called "*The Logicians Refuted*." In order as is supposed to draw attention to the publication as rescuing from obscurity a piece by the Dean of St. Patrick's, it was announced as really his in the newspapers of the day, by the publisher in the following terms, and is inserted by Sir Walter Scott upon the authority of the Dublin edition, in his collection of Swift's works. His attention was not drawn to it, as there appears no note or remark on its being considered the property of Goldsmith.

"The following poem," (says the advertisement) "written by Dean Swift, is communicated to the public by *The Busy Body*, to whom it was presented by a nobleman of distinguished learning and taste."

The sixth number, giving an account of the supposed rambles of the *Busy Body* through London during one of the nights of illumination for our successes in America, is beyond doubt by Goldsmith; it contains not only his sentiments, as seen in other pieces written about the same time, but his manner, his humour, and even his unusual phrases—such as "*May this be poison*," which is used in the *Adventures of a Strolling Player*, in the *Citizen of the World*, and in the *Haunch of Venison*; and the same exclamation is made to proceed from a drunken shoemaker, that he afterwards put into the mouth of the soldier, in the *Citizen of the World* when a French invasion was talked of, "*What would become of our holy religion!*" Even his residence at the moment may be traced; for he begins his ramble, as an inhabitant of Green-Arbour Court would probably do, in Ludgate Hill. The paper forms an example of his readiness and skill to seize and appropriate even a trivial topic for an essay: it was not republished by himself, probably because the subject was of a temporary nature.

In the seventh number, among other contributions, are the stanzas which appear in his poetical works, on the taking of Quebec. On the 3d of November the *Busy Body*, whose existence, like that of the *Bee*, was brief and not brilliant, having only reached the twelfth number, ceased as a distinct work, being then merged in another by a different publisher. Whatever other papers he may have furnished are unknown, nor does internal evidence supply a clew to the discovery.

The motive for engaging in this work, his participation in which has been hitherto unnoticed, was probably to assist Purdon, believed

to have been either editor, or one of the contributors : so that, when unable to furnish money to him or to others who made appeals to his friendship, he gave what to literary men formed an equivalent.

The *Lady's Magazine*, brought out by the publisher of the *Bee*, and nearly at the same moment, (1st October, 1759,) formed the third publication to which he contributed. It was said to be the first miscellany expressly appropriated to the fair sex ; and on that account probably came introduced as under the management of a female editor, who assumed the name of the Hon. Mrs. Caroline A. Stanhope. The disguise of sex, however, is so thinly preserved as to be penetrated in every page ; but it admitted of a flourishing advertisement, which though perhaps too careless to be drawn up by Goldsmith, has something of that antithetical smartness which he sometimes really adopted, and sometimes, as in one of his *Essays* (*Specimens of a Magazine in Miniature*,) made the subject of ridicule.

His share in this work at its commencement is not certainly known, and was probably inconsiderable, although about a year afterwards he appears from concurrent testimonies to have become its editor. Dr. Percy, who during his visits to the Poet, when in town had abundant opportunities of knowing the fact, merely states that he conducted the magazine for Wilkie, without referring to the precise time when so employed. Allusion was likewise made to this occupation on occasion of the affray with Evans the bookseller in 1773, and the remark made, however unfounded in fact, that one who as editor of a magazine had made free with the literary reputation of others, had little right to complain of similar liberties being taken with his own. Mr. Thomas English, well known among the literary men of the time, whose name has been mentioned in connexion with the *Annual Register*, said that Goldsmith, whom he personally knew, furnished the magazine at first with a few poetical pieces only, but that as editor his prose contributions were considerable.

The period at which this connexion took place will be hereafter noticed ; but of his early influence in the management there would appear to be traces in the first two numbers, which in a few lines devoted to Irish news, contain notices of petty events near Athlone of no interest and not likely to be selected from the mass of general intelligence respecting that country excepting by such as were attached to the spot by local ties or recollections. In the first number is an account of a decoy for birds in Lincolnshire, afterwards transcribed into his *Animated Nature* ; and the second commences with his story of Alcander and Septimius. The original papers on female life, manners, duties, and character, present something of his vivacity and humour, but, when closely examined, want the turn of thought and the finish which belong to his general style.

Of the poetical pieces attributed to him by Mr. English we have no certain knowledge. Two songs already given from the recollection of Mrs. Lawder, are in the second number ; and likewise another production, a rebus, which though then a staple article of

ingenuity in the chief magazines of the day, would scarcely be suspected to claim him as its author. It is in praise of Newbery, the bookseller; to whom as will be seen, his obligations were numerous.

“What we say of a thing which is just come in fashion,
And that which we do with the dead,
Is the name of the honestest man in the nation:
What more of a man can be said?”

The premature termination of the *Bee*, and *Busy Body*, and disconnexion with the magazine just mentioned, left him at liberty to look round for other literary employment, and very little time was lost in the search. His facility and ingenuity as a writer appeared to be well understood by what is called *the trade*; for two of its most active members immediately engaged him.

One of these was Smollett, who by his numerous speculations and compilations on various subjects, had become so identified with booksellers, as to be intent, only according to his opponents, on the commercial not the literary value of books. He had been the subject of jocular remark even to Goldsmith for this propensity, in a paper of the *Bee*, in which while Johnson, Hume, and others, are supposed to be seeking seats in a vehicle appropriated to Fame, he is represented as more desirous to enter the stage-coach of riches.*

The other was the bookseller just mentioned, Mr. John Newbery of St. Paul's Churchyard, known for probity, good sense, and a benevolent disposition, but more popularly for the juvenile volumes supplied in their youth to that generation which has just passed away. He had been brought up to trade at Reading in Berkshire, but changing his occupation and residence, and being an intelligent man with a taste for reading, commenced the business of bookseller in London. Observing the want of a class of books fit to engage and instruct the eager curiosity of children and youth, he set about remedying the defect, partly by entering on the business of author himself, but chiefly by employing with this view men of considerable talents though little known to fame; and to these were added for occasional purposes of a higher description, Goldsmith, Christopher Smart who had married his daughter-in-law, Guthrie, Hugh Kelly, and a few more.

His ingenuity and amiable qualities rendered him soon generally respected. Writers of the first character sought his acquaintance, and in his friendship not unfrequently found occasional alleviation of their most pressing wants. Among these were Dr. Johnson,—a few of whose applications to him for assistance are now, for the first time, made public in the subjoined communications;† and similar loans, of

*Bee, No. V.; Works, vol. i.

† “*To Mr. Newbery.*”

“DEAR SIR,

“I have just now a demand upon me for more money than I have by me: if you could conveniently help me with two pounds, it will be a favour, to

“Sir,

“Your most humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.

“April 18, 1751.”

which the evidences remain, were rendered to Bonnel Thornton, Guthrie, Mrs. Lennox, David Erskine Baker, Bickerstaffe and others, whose acknowledgments for temporary supplies are still in existence; and he became the confidential friend of the celebrated Dr. James, whose medicines he sold, and the property of which continues in his family. It is Goldsmith however who, in the "Vicar of Wakefield," has given him a certain immortality. He is introduced and described in that work (chap. xviii.) in connexion with an act of benevolence towards the chief personage of the tale, who thus sketches his face and manner in a few words:—"This person was no other than the philanthropic bookseller in St. Paul's Churchyard, who has written so many little books for children: he called himself their friend; but he was the friend of all mankind. He was no sooner alighted but he was in haste to be gone; for he was ever on business of the utmost importance, and was at that time actually compiling materials for the history of one Mr. Thomas Trip. I immediately recollected this good-natured man's red-pimpled face."

By Smollett and this gentleman several works had been carried through the press in conjunction; and each had at this moment new, though not rival, speculations in hand. The former announced as editor, the "British Magazine," in which there is reason to believe Newbery had a share; while the latter, as chief proprietor, started the "Public Ledger," a daily newspaper still in existence and the original popularity of which was said to be owing to the contribu-

On the back of this is endorsed the following receipt:—

"20th April.—Received of Mr. Newbery the sum of two guineas for the use of Mr. Johnson, pr me,

"THOS. LUCY."

"To Mr. Newbery.

"SIR,

"I beg the favour of you to send me by the bearer, a guinea, for which I will account to you on some future production.

"I am, Sir,

"Your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON.

"July 29, 1751."

Endorsed on the back by Thos. Lucy, as in the preceding.

"August 24, 1751."

"DEAR SIR,

"I beg the favour of you to lend me another guinea, for which I shall be glad of any opportunity to account with you, as soon as any proper thing can be thought on, or which I will repay you in a few weeks.

"I am, Sir,

"Your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Endorsed as before.

"May 19, 1759.

"I promise to pay to Mr. Newbery the sum of forty-two pounds nineteen shillings and ten pence on demand, value received.

"SAM. JOHNSON.

"£42...19...10."

"March, 20, 1760.

"I promise to pay to Mr. Newbery, the sum of thirty pounds upon demand.

"SAM. JOHNSON.

"£30...0...0."

Another memorandum of Newbery's simply states,—“Lent Mr. Johnson, July 30, £1...1.”

tions of Goldsmith. Both undertakings were to commence with the new year, 1760.

This seemed the era of magazines; for in addition to the British, there were announced nearly at the same moment, "The Imperial," "The Public," "The Weekly," and "The Royal Female," Magazines. "The Lady's Magazine," as we have seen, and "The Royal Magazine" had started into being only a few months previously; while "The Gentleman's" "The Universal," "The London," "The Grand," and to outdo all in promise and in name, "The Grand Magazine of Magazines," were enjoying all the honours and advantages of confirmed existence. Amid such a host of active competitors for public favour, Smollett probably believed that his undertaking might pass unnoticed unless introduced with all the ceremony due to an author of his established pretensions. The subjoined announcement therefore was made, with a degree of parade which, emanating from any other quarter, would have formed a fruitful subject for ridicule to his sarcastic wit:* but as the record of a publication to which he and Goldsmith gave the aid of their talents, it is worthy of being preserved.

The name of the latter as a contributor was not mentioned, no doubt by his own desire; not possibly from being above appearing in the same page even in a periodical work with that of Smollett; but being unknown as having produced any thing of popular interest, he was unwilling to make his first appearance in small things when conscious of powers capable of accomplishing almost the greatest. The knowledge of his aid as an auxiliary was confined to his friends only, or those immediately connected with the work. The first number appeared on the 1st of January, 1760. Of his share in it as distinguished from Smollett, an imperfect knowledge only can now be obtained: internal evidence and subsequent reclamation supply something, but not all. The dedication, in a strain of extreme eulogy to Mr. Pitt, who was then the idol of the nation and considered by his public services almost a personal benefactor of the individuals composing it, is obviously not by Goldsmith. If Smollett were the writer, he changed his politics on the accession of Lord Bute to power the following year by giving the aid of his pen to the support of that

* "By the King's authority.

"Dr. Smollett having represented to his Majesty that he has been at great labour and expense in writing original pieces himself, and engaging other gentlemen to write original pieces, to be published in the 'British Magazine, or Monthly Repository for Gentlemen and Ladies,' his Majesty was pleased to signify his approbation of the said work by granting his royal licence to the said Dr. Smollett;

"And this Day is published, Price 6d.,

"Embellished with three curious Copper-plates,

"Number II. of

"THE BRITISH MAGAZINE;

OR,

"MONTHLY REPOSITORY FOR GENTLEMEN AND LADIES.

"By T. SMOLLETT, M. D., and Others.

"Printed for H. PAYNE, at Dryden's Head, in Paternoster Row; and sold by all Booksellers in Great Britain and Ireland;

"Of whom may be had No. I."

nobleman. But at this moment he possessed surer means of giving currency to the magazine than the favour or flattery of any minister whatever;—he had a new novel in hand. In the first number appeared the “Adventures of Sir Launcelot Greaves;” and a chapter being given each succeeding month till the conclusion, in December 1761, a portion of interest was thus kept up for two years; before which the undertaking became fully established in public favour.

Goldsmith, less interested in the adventure, or less systematically prepared, came to the task with a stock of the then usual magazine wares—Essays, stories, and Oriental tales, a few only of which he republished in the volume of essays already mentioned. Others which were shorter, less finished, or considered of less interest, though all bearing traces of his spirit and humour, were left in obscurity to be dug up by the research of future admirers; and Wright the printer, in the volumes mentioned as edited by Isaac Reed, has rescued many. Among these were several classical criticisms, the style of which admits of no mistake, and were further known to be his by Bishop Percy and Malone; but there are still a few others to be gleaned by diligent examination: and of such a writer even in his more careless effusions who would willingly loose any thing?

Smollett, with genius fitted for almost any department of literature, seems never to have aimed at adding the character of essayist to that of historian, novelist, and critic; nor was the bent of his mind perhaps quite fitted for it by nature. His touch was bold, and frequently coarse; his personages drawn with something of caricature; his humour broad; his wit, descriptions, and incidents, sometimes licentious and even indecent; his satire shrewd, sarcastic, and often bitter, exhibiting more of the spirit of Juvenal than of Horace, therefore less likely to be received with favour by the mass of mankind as corrector of their faults and foibles.

Goldsmith, a more indulgent observer of human nature, had also more amenity of mind and manners, and notwithstanding the greater licence of language of that day, is rarely betrayed into indelicacy of thought or expression. He appears to draw characters and tell stories more accurately true to life; never exaggerates for the sake of producing effect; his humour unlike Smollett's is chastened, his mirth never boisterous, his raillery playful, and free from that tendency to misanthropic severity not unfrequent in the writings of his coadjutor. He paints the peculiarities of mankind minutely, yet with ease and freedom of hand, as if the task of observing and detailing cost him no effort. With all the tenderness of a fellow-mortal conscious of the operation of human passions and frailties within himself, he was willing to be gentle, yet corrective, in dealing with those of others; and this perhaps forms one of his claims to what Johnson has called him in the Epitaph, “*lenis dominator.*”

In their styles of writing, as in their spirit, some differences likewise appear. Smollett, commonly content with being clear and forcible, aims at no other merit; Goldsmith, in addition to perspicuity, is almost always elegant yet natural; he seems incapable of throwing off a slovenly sentence; and this not so much from study or cor-

rection, for it is never rounded for the sake of effect, as from that natural taste which costs no labour, and is to the great majority of writers unattainable by art. "It may be observed," says Bishop Percy, (and the writer can confirm this testimony from what yet remains,) "that his elegant and enchanting style in prose flowed from him with so much facility, that in whole quires of his histories, 'Animated Nature,' &c., he had seldom occasion to correct or alter a single word." Smollett is rarely to be tracked through the mazes of periodical literature in the same manner as Goldsmith. He is wanting in the mannerism that belongs frequently to men of genius, and which gives to anonymous writings nearly as much certainty as if their names were affixed to the papers. However great and varied his powers as a writer, this specific character is wanting: he wrote too carelessly and multifariously to preserve strong individuality; we cannot trace his train of thought, his favourite phrases, the turn of his periods, or known sentiments. By these Johnson was often detected when perhaps he had little desire to be known. By these Goldsmith also, is occasionally to be traced by such as are intimately conversant with his writings, particularly when, from his own admission, or the information of others, we know the channels through which they first found their way to the public.

Two other contributors to the Magazine, either at its commencement, or immediately afterwards, are said to have been Mr. Griffith Jones, and Mr Huddleston Wynne; the former an assistant to Newbery in the arrangement of his little books: the latter known at the time from a variety of works in prose and verse, though not of permanent interest. To these probably belong the inferior essays; to Goldsmith or Smollett those of a more finished description. Still, among a variety of short pieces some necessarily inferior to others, doubts as to their origin will prevail; and all that can be done is, to point out to the attention of the reader such as are probable where certain knowledge cannot now be obtained. But involved as Smollett seems at all times to have been in a multiplicity of literary projects, it may not be wide of the truth to infer that his name, his novel, and some general superintendence, were as much as he could give to a work of this description.

The papers which Goldsmith thought proper to own by reprinting them in one of his volumes, were one in the February number of the Magazine, one in March, one in April, one in June; where likewise appear the lines from the Bee, "On a Beautiful Child struck Blind by Lightning," which are here represented to be on one who had been deprived of sight by the small-pox; and one in October. These are such as he considered most finished, and not unworthy of the author of the "Traveller," which poem this volume in its period of publication immediately succeeded, and with which he probably thought it would be contrasted.

Others of undoubted authenticity, though deemed by him of less interest for the purpose then in view, were early known to be his; one if not two in January, one in February, one in April, one in an extra number of the Magazine to which no month is prefixed, but

seemingly published between April and May; one if not two in May; one in June, four in July, one in August, and one in September; all of which will find place in his works. The doubtful papers are about seven or eight in number; one of these in January, "On the Bravery of the English Common Soldiers," appears in the works of Dr. Johnson; and although perhaps properly placed there, its history may deserve inquiry from some incorrect statements which have appeared.

Boswell informs us that it was added to the "Idler" by Dr. Johnson when first collected into volumes; but in this he errs; for it was neither added by him, nor is it to be found in the early editions of that work; and for all that appears may have been included afterwards without sufficient inquiry. So great was the reputation of that eminent writer, that any original paper from him would have been announced with every degree of publicity and triumph, as were those simply *reprinted* from other sources. Thus, in the same number of the Magazine, the 89th paper of the "Idler," then in course of publication, is republished with the following introductory remark:—"The reader, we imagine, will not be displeased to learn, that we propose to enrich every number of the British Magazine with one paper from the 'Idler,' by permission of the author, whose great genius and extensive learning may be justly numbered among the most shining ornaments of the present age." Other reasons for questioning its origin in consequence of this ambiguity appear in the allusions, several of which may be found in other parts of the writings of Goldsmith: he further pursued the subject in the Magazine for June—the "Distresses of a Common Soldier," reprinted in the Citizen of the World, and again in the volume of essays in 1765; a paper which has been much praised by French critics as breathing the spirit of an humble optimist. It would appear that Boswell was unacquainted with the previous publication of the essay in this Magazine; and likewise that Smollett or whoever officiated as editor, knew not or considered it not to be written by Johnson, or they would have proclaimed the honour for the credit of their work.

Among the supposed contributions of Goldsmith, but less certain from being less finished, is a tale where we find something like the first rude germ of the Vicar of Wakefield. The catastrophe is indeed unnatural and abrupt, obviously hurried to a conclusion and written probably when the press required an immediate supply of matter. But looking to the scene which is laid in the north of England; the hero, a clergyman; his hospitality; his character and peculiarities, "sitting by the way side to welcome the passing stranger," and replying to their news by some parallel instance from antiquity, or anecdote of his youth; circumstances so much in the spirit and manner of the novel, and of the Deserted Village; his love for his daughter; her seduction; the character and description of the seducer for whom he finds the Irish name of Dawson; the grief of the agonized father, first shown in threats, and then the recollection that his sacred calling precluded him having recourse

to violence to resent the injury; added to minute circumstances, which strike the attentive reader; all render it probable that this formed the first draught of a tale which we have hitherto known only in its perfect state. It is called the "History of Miss Stanton."

"For several months he ceased to render further assistance in consequence of becoming by his own account afterwards, editor of the *Lady's Magazine*. But this connexion being either of short continuance, or having time on his hands for the purpose, and deeming the *British Magazine* a more suitable medium for pursuing such a subject, he commenced in that work in July 1761 a series of papers on the *Belles Lettres*, embracing a considerable portion of classical criticism. These were continued, with the exception of the months of November 1761, and July, August, October, and December 1762 (when it will be seen he was otherwise employed,) until January, 1763. They then terminated abruptly it would seem, for the last communication bears the usual intimation, *To be continued*. Fourteen papers altogether were given, each forming about three pages of the *Magazine*, printed in double columns; and attention was either drawn to them, or the proprietors were willing to do so, by a passage in the preface to the volume for 1762, where it is stated as if much consideration were due to the subject of the writer, that besides four articles continued uninterruptedly through the work, they have "added a fifth on the subject of the *Belles Lettres*, which we flatter ourselves will meet with peculiar approbation." The last essay of a miscellaneous nature communicated by him was "Proposals for augmenting the Forces of Great Britain," strongly marked with his characteristic humour, which appeared in January 1762.

The contributions alluded to by the proprietors in the above passage as creditable to their miscellany and an additional claim on the patronage of the public, were in biography, natural history, and the histories of France and Canada. With the greater part, or probably the whole of these Goldsmith had no concern: the historical articles indeed commencing with the first number, by a coincidence no doubt accidental ceased about the same time (March 1763) as his communications and with equal abruptness; for they are noted, "To be continued." The narration is not without merit, but wants the terseness, vigour, and spirit of philosophical reflection common to his other histories; qualities which tended so largely to enhance their popularity. Neither are they likely to have been by Smollett, who still if we are to believe the advertisement, retained his connexion with the *Magazine*. One or both may indeed have been rough-drawn under his direction by an inferior workman; a conjecture which receives countenance from the fact of being discontinued shortly before the state of his health rendered it necessary to quit England for the Continent in June 1763.

Connected with the history of this *Magazine* ere it became generally known, a paper which appeared in the *Public Ledger* must not be forgotten. Publications, like men, require the most active friends in the earlier stages of their being; for it is then, when in a state of obscurity that introduction becomes kind and publicity useful; when

known, this kind of assistance becomes no longer necessary. What in the latter case would appear unbecoming praise, is in the former but a recommendation to the good opinion of the world. To introduce the work in the best manner to public favour, Goldsmith, whose skill seems to have been perfectly appreciated by such as knew him, was applied to. He could do for Smollett's undertaking what the latter without a violation of modesty could not do for himself—praise his talents with all the warmth of an admirer. A very skilful notice was therefore introduced in the form of an amusing letter bearing date February 16th 1760, which for its humour, will be perused with pleasure. It is entitled, "A Description of a Wow Wow in the Country," and will be given in another place. Here it may be remarked as a peculiarity in all his communications, that he scarcely ever uses a distinguishing signature: for however they may be couched in the epistolary form, there is, with one or two exceptions only, no name affixed even when a name might be supposed to add to the humour of the subject.

CHAPTER X.

Public Ledger.—Chinese Letters.—Lady's Magazine.—Removes to Wine-Office Court.—Dr. Johnson.—Garrick.—Introduction to History of the War.—Project for Visiting Asia.

His engagement with Newbery in the newspaper, as already remarked, was nearly simultaneous with that in the Magazine, the difference of time being no more than a few days; but as the latter by coming out on the 1st of January had the priority, his connexion with it has been first noticed. To the former however he contributed more largely; and the papers so furnished have proved one of the sources of his fame.

The first number of the Public Ledger appeared on the 12th of January 1760; introduced by a long and laboured prospectus which formed the leading article for many days. In addition to original news, it was to concentrate facts from contemporary journals; to be a medium of communication on all matters of commerce or business; to give original papers on literature; "supply information to the industrious, and amusement to the idle;" in a word to combine in the usual flourishing strain of applicants for public favour, matters incompatible, and put forth promises rarely fulfilled, and which none has more happily ridiculed than Goldsmith, who had some experience in similar propitiatory addresses, in one of his Essays. On this occasion judging from internal evidence he seems not to have been employed. Newbery, however anxious for the success of the undertaking, probably thought it more the affair of a man of business than of genius; he therefore either wrote it himself or entrusted

it to his editor, who is said to have been Mr. Griffith Jones, already mentioned as connected afterwards with the British Magazine. It is well drawn up, but wants the more marked characteristics of the author of the "Citizen of the World."

The agreement was to furnish papers of an amusing character twice a week, for which according to contemporary statements, he was to receive a salary of 100*l.* per annum; and this being at the rate of something less than a guinea each, is probably true. It is a curious coincidence, that Dr. Johnson should have been employed by the same publisher to contribute papers of a similar description to the "Universal Chronicle," a weekly newspaper commenced by him in April, 1758, in which the "Idler,"* still at that moment in course of publication, first appeared; and no stronger testimony can be given of the opinion formed of the talents of Goldsmith at this period however little known to the world, than his being chosen the prop of one newspaper as the greatest writer of the age had been of another.

He appears either not to have had, or not to have matured, a systematic form for his contributions on their commencement. Two miscellaneous papers precede the first of the Chinese letters; one on the 17th of January five days after the first publication of the newspaper; the other on the 19th; both possessing all his characteristic manner, and much of his humour; and which like so many of his fugitive pieces have been hitherto unnoticed. In the one he animadverts on a supposed peculiarity of our countrymen, that of unmeasured abuse of the public enemy during war; a failing which his natural benevolence of disposition, and some of that regard for the better qualities of the French character exhibited in the "Traveller," led him now and in other passages of his writings, in the sixth number of the "Busy Body," for instance, to censure as unbecoming in generous opponents. Having thus lectured the men, the other paper contains a humorous attack upon the supposed foibles of the fair sex, in a letter from the "Goddess of Silence to the Ladies of London and Westminster greeting." Both papers will be found in the Works.

Miscellaneous papers however give no distinct character to the writer, because general readers seldom know them to proceed from the same pen. A distinguishing title or subject preserves identity,

* For writing the "Idler," Johnson is said to have received a share of the profits of the paper. When first collected into volumes, two-thirds of the profits were given to him, as appears by the following account, copied from the original, rendered by Newbery, which will interest the literary reader:—

			"The Idler."						
"Dr.			£	s.	d.	Cr.	£	s.	d.
Paid for advertising			20	0	6	1500 Sets at £16 per 100	240	0	0
Printing 2 vols. 1500			41	13	0				
Paper			52	3	0	Dr. Johnson 2-3ds	84	2	4
						Mr. Newbery 1-3d	42	1	2
			113	16	6				
Profit on the Edition			126	3	6		£126	3	6"
			£240	0	0				

and fixes a stronger hold upon the imagination of those who would win or influence: we seem then in the nature of acquaintance; we meet and part with the hope if agreeable of meeting again; and a series of papers so noted will be read with more interest than without such clew to guide us to the author. The "Spectator," published among other essays without appropriating a specific name, would not have been so attractive as with it.

A plan being matured, he assumed the character of a Chinese philosopher, who in travelling to Europe from the laudable motive of examining mankind at large, and acquiring wisdom by experience, had fixed his residence for a time in England, and aimed at describing the manners of its people. The idea was not new: the Turkish Spy, and the Persian and Peruvian Letters, and similar productions, had sought and secured much public attention in France. Swift had formed some such design, though not wholly the same, from the greater rudeness of the people who were to be introduced as giving the fruits of their observation, in making the Indian chiefs who were in London during the reign of Queen Anne tell the story of their travels; a project which by communicating to Steele, the latter marred by a paper or two in the "Tatler" and "Spectator."*

Works of this kind were executed with tolerable spirit and skill, insure considerable popularity in almost all countries. Human nature is pleased to see images of itself multiplied; and nations no less than individuals like to be portrayed when the portrait is drawn with a certain portion of good nature. Vanity may have something to do with this feeling, yet it is not without utility. We are desirous to know what others think, and even what fictitious characters may be supposed to think, of our conduct and habits; a species of mental mirror is thus held up to general view, reflecting back faults and follies that from their familiarity pass unnoticed, or pass with less of reproof than they deserve, but which by being paraded before us are in time corrected. Even peculiarities which are objectionable yet possess no portion of positive evil often become by being pointed out divested of their more disagreeable features; and when this kind of *weeding* is diligently exercised, foreigners are left without excuse for overlooking in accidental variations of manners the virtues of a rival nation.

It may gratify curiosity to know that his first design according to accounts of his friends was to make his hero a native of Morocco or Fez; but, reflecting on the rude nature of the people of Barbary, this idea was dropped. A Chinese was then chosen as offering more novelty of character than a Turk or Persian; and being equally advanced in the scale of civilisation, could pass an opinion

* He writes to Stella, April 28, 1711,—“The ‘Spectator’ is written by Steele, with Addison’s help; ’tis often very pretty. Yesterday it was made of a noble hint I gave him long ago for his Tatlers, about an Indian supposed to write his travels into England. I repent he ever had it: I intended to have written a book on that subject. I believe he has spent it all in one paper, and all the under hints there are mine too.” This paper, however, is marked as Addison’s, to whom Steele no doubt communicated it.

on all he saw better than the native of a more barbarous country. From a passage in one of his letters to Bryanton in a foregoing page, it seems certain that Goldsmith viewed that people with considerable interest. China, by its distance, its reputed antiquity, its disinclination to receive or to visit strangers, its arts, its science and general knowledge however imperfect, and the long submission of its people to an exclusive and jealous policy of the governing power, has always been an object of curiosity to the nations of Europe. Du Halde's history had rather increased than diminished this feeling: the novelty of that work had not yet passed away among the learned, though from its voluminous nature the contents continued in a great degree unknown to the body of general readers. An opportunity therefore offered, while commenting upon English habits and opinions, to introduce allusions to those of a people who claiming for themselves the highest degree of civilisation, by stigmatizing all Europeans as barbarians, yet exhibit many traces of imperfect advancement of mind.

The first number of the letters, including the short introductory one, appeared on the 24th January 1760; the second on the 29th; the third on the 31st. In the month of February there were ten letters, in March ten, in April eight, in May ten, in June eleven, in July eight, in August nine, in September ten, in October ten, in November six, and in December three: making together ninety-eight letters within the year although marked in the newspaper ninety-seven; an error arising from the number twenty-five being twice used in continuing the same subject. These with the three papers already quoted, give nearly his stated proportion, from the 12th of January, of two each week. But there is little doubt that he furnished others, though possibly less finished and therefore more difficult to trace; such as on the encouragement of Opera Singers and Operas, (Sept. 16th,) and on the Institution of Amateur Concerts for the benefit of the Poor, November 3d. Several of his papers from the British Magazine were likewise transferred to the columns of the Ledger, in return for many of the Chinese Letters being embodied in the pages of the former.

The success of his labors imparted the first assurance of that literary reputation we have seen him adverting to in jest and ardently hoping in earnest; an enlarged circulation according to all contemporary testimony was thus insured to the journal in which they appeared, and the foundation laid for its permanency; for among innumerable candidates for public favour it still continues to be one. The lucubrations of the Chinese Philosopher were generally read, admired, and reprinted: they regularly formed after the third or fourth number the first article in the newspaper, one of the evidences of popularity and merit; they became also what was perhaps very flattering though not very profitable to the writer, a mine which the periodical publications of the day thought themselves at liberty freely to work and appreciate.

Viewed as a production of genius, it is not necessary to characterize what has long taken its stand among the list of English Clas-

sics. Our manners, peculiarities, and character, are sketched by a discriminating but not unfriendly hand; we find in all its essential features English life; not of the higher, nor always even of the middling class, but furnishing a familiar view of that mass emphatically termed the people. If his delineations be occasionally homely, there is in them, at least, truth and distinctness, nature, vigour, and observation. Writing not as a moral essayist, and less as a reasoner than describer, his topics even when not new present an air of novelty; for a very unnecessary apprehension seems always to have influenced him which appears in many of his remarks, of his papers being thought too grave, or what he considered nearly synonymous with seriousness, dull. He aims therefore to be on whatever topic he touches almost always sprightly, always ready with an anecdote to tell or a character to describe illustrative of his remarks or argument; his humour flows without effort; his wit without a tinge of ill-nature; and even folly is treated with a forbearance and good humour which her errors do not always receive at the hands of wisdom. The character of Beau Tibbs is remembered by every reader of the work: frivolous and self-important, impudent yet good humoured, a pretender to fashion although utterly obscure, meeting the exposures to which this pretension subjects him with complacency or ready excuse, and assuming the airs of wealth when possessing scarcely the common comforts of life,—he forms an amusing specimen of a class sometimes found in a great metropolis. The original is said to have been a person named Thornton; one of his acquaintance, and once in the army: the humour is so happy and the sketch so well given that we are willing perhaps to believe it from the life, heightened in some degree but essentially true in its leading features. It will remind the reader of the familiar acquaintance described in the *Haunch of Venison*.

The objections urged against the *Letters* were such as criticism is fond of displaying, yet conscious they are scarcely just: the sentiments and observations were not considered appropriate to the assumed writer; the mask was supposed to fall off too often, and we discovered not a foreigner but a native. Books of this kind however are understood to be works not of fact but of fiction; not travels to instruct but essays to amuse: every reader who takes them up knows that they were not written, and could not well be written, by a Chinese, and that were such even possible the descriptions would be neither so correct nor amusing as they are. As in the case of theatrical representation, we are not deceived by what is passing before us, or the deception exists but for an instant. All that we really require at the hands of either is the pleasure derived from good imitation, and when this is sufficiently natural, amusing, and vigorous, the purpose is answered. That the Poet thought the objection frivolous may be inferred from what seems to be meant for a sneering reply to correspondents of this class: it is prefixed to the thirty-second letter in the newspaper (May 2d): "The editor on this and every other occasion has endeavoured to translate the letter writer in such a manner as he himself, had he understood English, would

have written. The reader is requested also to impute all the nonsense and dulness he may happen to find in this and every other letter to *errors of the press.*"

Toward the end of the year they ceased to appear so frequently, partly from the design being nearly completed, partly perhaps from the author resuming his connexion, either as editor or contributor, with the *Lady's Magazine*. Several pieces in the latter work at this time bear traces of his manner; and selections from such as he had published through other channels were freely reprinted. In the number for November 1760, we find, exclusive of what may be considered original contributions, one of the Chinese letters; in December another, besides a paper on popular preaching afterwards republished in his *Essays*; in January a Chinese letter; and in February, to spare himself perhaps the trouble of original composition, he commenced giving the life of Voltaire, already mentioned, which thence continued the first article in every month till its conclusion in November 1761. The number for April is almost all from his writings: we have for the first article a portion of Voltaire's memoir, a paper from the *Bee*, on the dress of the English ladies; a Chinese letter; Zemin and Galhinda, an eastern tale, the authorship of which is pretty certain; besides thoughts on the English Poets from the *Literary Magazine*; and others less certain, though probable.

How long he continued to superintend the work if really conducted by him is uncertain, but probably till the conclusion of the sketch of Voltaire. His own labours which may pretty well be traced to about that period, consist of letters and essays on female education, manners, and general conduct: they exhibit humour and playfulness, closeness of observation, and knowledge of human nature; the admonitions are in good taste, inculcated less by formal precept than through the medium of anecdote or story; with a just estimate of the feelings, understanding, and accomplishments of those whom he addressed, he shows becoming tenderness towards their foibles. The *Magazine* seems to have had great success: an advertisement in August 1762, stating that in three years above 120,000 numbers, or more than three thousand three hundred per month had been sold.

During the years 1760—61, his writings were forcing their way into notice when his name continued nearly unknown. We trace the general sense entertained of their merit in the fact, that in turning over the pages of the periodical works of the day, scarcely one is to be found without several of his papers reprinted from other sources; so that without minute and careful inquiry it is difficult to trace the precise channel through which several of his papers were first introduced to public notice. Even when there were but few in a series, as in the *Busy Body*, these literary freebooters had the sagacity to perceive, and the assurance to select for their own advantage what they discovered to contribute most powerfully to the public amusement. Commonly the obligation was not only not acknowledged, but besides being for the moment deprived of the honours of originality, the popularity of his past labours were occasionally made to counterbalance the weight of those that occupied him at the moment.

The Imperial Magazine, for instance, which started in January 1760, at the same time and in rivalry with the British in which he was engaged, contained in its first number two of his papers from the Bee as original articles; he had thus to contend in the race for public favour not only with the genius of others, but with his own. As in the case of certain outlaws in society, his progeny were seized upon wherever found; not indeed to be punished for their demerits, but to be exhibited for our applause.

It was the knowledge of the degree of esteem awarded to his merit that drew from Dr. Johnson, who seems to have known more of his labours than most others of his contemporaries, frequent encomiums on one of the modes of composition in which he excelled. "I was dining," said Dr. Farr who frequently told the anecdote, "at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, August 7th, 1773, where, amongst other company, were the Archbishop of Tuam and Mr. (now Lord) Eliot, when the latter, making use of some sarcaistical reflections on Goldsmith, Johnson broke out warmly in his defence, and in the course of a spirited eulogium said, 'Is there a man, Sir, now who can pen an essay with such ease and elegance as Goldsmith?'"

The possession of a more liberal income arising from the connexion with the Public Ledger, produced corresponding improvement in his situation. About the middle of the year 1760, he left Green Arbour Court, or Square, as it was once termed, for respectable lodgings in Wine-Office Court, Fleet Street, where for about two years he remained with an acquaintance or relative of the friendly bookseller, Newbery. Here he was often visited by Dr. Percy during his excursions to London, who occasionally told anecdotes of him at this time in conversation which he omitted to introduce into the memoir. One of these related to a foreign artist, a sculptor, whom the Poet had known slightly abroad, and paid as much attention to in London as his time and means permitted. Goldsmith thought he had been fortunate in the execution of two or three busts, and very elegantly and happily told him, "Sir, you live by the dead, and the dead live by you."

Here likewise if traditional notices by other old associates are to be trusted, he acquired a pretty numerous acquaintance of the literary class: some no doubt men of genius; others of that laborious, yet unsuccessful order, who after spending their lives in the drudgery of literature, quit the world without leaving behind them a trace of their occupation that is either read or remembered;—a species of borderers upon Parnassus who beat diligently around its base, but want vigour and ingenuity to reach its summit.

Among the former were Christopher Smart, Guthrie, the Rev. Mr. Franklin, a coadjutor in the Critical Review and translator of Sophocles, Murphy, Bickerstaffe, and others. Of inferior powers, were Woty, a poet now forgotten; the Rev. William Ryder, under-master in St. Paul's School, and author of a variety of works, a History of England, a Family Bible, Translations of Voltaire, and afterwards editor of a Lady's Magazine; Collyer, known by some compilations, and a few translations from the German; Griffiths and Giles Jones;

Huddleston Wynne, who besides other things now forgotten, among which were some poems, was author of a History of Ireland, said to have been undertaken at the recommendation of Goldsmith. In a class still lower, yet not deficient in talents or scholarship had their conduct been directed by morals and industry were Hiffernan, Purdon, Pilkington, and others, of whom scarce even the names are remembered. Most of these were without money, and some without principle; and as Goldsmith was social in his habits, easy of access, and known to be generous when he had any thing to give, he became sometimes the convenience of one class, and the prey of another. Of his unwillingness to refuse any request however unreasonable, the following anecdote told by himself some years afterwards with considerable humour, is a characteristic instance.

Pilkington, son of the Rev. Matthew and Mrs. Letitia Pilkington of Dublin, unhappily known by their quarrels and writings, being thrown upon the world by the disunion of his parents, found refuge in the house of an uncle, a physician at Cork. Inheriting the eccentricities of his relatives, for the uncle was not free from them, he was discarded thence for misconduct; and having been brought up partly to music, joined Pockrich, another extraordinary character of Ireland, who, having wholly dissipated according to report, a fortune of four thousand pounds per annum, earned a livelihood afterwards by precarious means, particularly some skill in playing on the musical glasses. He died not less strangely than he lived, having lost his life in a fire in Cornhill on the night of one of his principal performances. Pilkington, after the loss of his employer or coadjutor, subsisted by any device that promised to raise money. He was at this time employed in writing his life, which was soon afterwards published in two volumes: their contents and the equivocal fame of his mother as exhibited in her own memoirs and who had died a few years before, gave them some notice and circulation. In Dublin, probably at college, for there was a Pilkington there in 1748, he is said to have first known Goldsmith; or as a fellow countryman engaged like himself in the service of literature, he found ready admittance to him in London. He had already under various pretences, levied small contributions on the purse of his acquaintance, but on another occasion when no common plea promised to be successful, a new and ingenious one was adopted.

Calling upon the unsuspecting poet in 1760, he gave vent to many regrets that the immediate want of a small sum prevented the prospect of a rich return. Upon inquiry of the circumstances, he said that a lady of the first rank (the name of the Duchess of Manchester or of Portland was mentioned,) being well known for her attachment to curious animals, and the large prices given for the indulgence of this taste, a friend in India desirous to serve him had sent home two white mice, then on board a ship in the river, which were to be offered to her Grace. He had apprised her of their arrival and she expressed impatience to see the animals, but unfortunately he had neither an appropriate cage for their reception, nor clothes fit to appear in before

a lady of rank: two guineas would accomplish both objects, but where, alas! were two guineas to be procured? Goldsmith, with great sincerity replied that he possessed only half a guinea and that sum necessarily could be of no use; the opening however was too favourable and the applicant too dexterous, to permit his attempt to be thus parried. He begged to suggest with much diffidence and deference,—the emergency was pressing and might form some apology for the liberty,—that the money might be raised from a neighbouring pawnbroker by the deposit of his friend's watch;—the inconvenience could not be great, and at most of only a few hours' continuance; it would rescue a sincere friend from enthrallment, and confer an eternal obligation. The mode of appeal proved irresistible: the money was raised in the manner pointed out, but neither watch nor white mice were afterwards heard of, nor even Mr. Pilkington himself until a lapse of seven months, when a paragraph in the *Ledger* informed the world that he, giving his name nearly at full length, was endeavouring to raise money in a more equivocal manner.

It is the province of ingenuity to turn even misfortunes to advantage. The whim, or supposed whim, of the lady whose name was used on this occasion furnished the sufferer with what he was frequently on the watch for, a hint for an essay; and it soon appeared in the whimsical story of Prince Bonbennin and the White Mouse, forming numbers forty-eight and forty-nine of Chinese Letters. The loss of a watch thus gave origin to a tale the moral of which as if peculiarly worthy of notice he emphatically marks in italics at its conclusion: "That they who place their affections on trifles at first for amusement, will find those trifles at last become their most serious concern."

To glean hints from every quarter where the character, manners, and amusements of a people are displayed, is a necessary part of the business of him who describes them. Scenes of humbler life were therefore not neglected, for there in fact, national peculiarities are best seen. An anecdote connected with a scene of familiar and popular recreation which he is known often to have visited was told by Kenrick, by whom it was supposed to have been communicated with some variation of circumstances to the *Ledger*,* where it was certain to meet the eye of Goldsmith. The authority is indeed apocryphal; we may therefore rather believe it true from the alleged ludicrous embarrassment in which he was found being characteristic of his ready though inconsiderate generosity.

When strolling in the gardens of White Conduit House, he met with three females of the family of a respectable tradesman, whom for some favour received in the way of his occupation, he invited without hesitation to take tea. The repast passed off with great hilarity, but when the time of payment arrived, he found to his infinite mortification he had not sufficient money for the purpose. To add to his annoyance occasioned by this discovery, some acquaintances in whose eyes he wished to stand particularly well, came up,

* June, 11, 1760.

discovered his perplexity by a remark of the waiter, and willing to enjoy it, professed at first their inability to relieve him; nor was it till after much amusement had been enjoyed at his expense that the debt was discharged.

Another story of the same period and coming from the same quarter, is to be received with similar caution. Having joined a few brother authors and others in a white-bait dinner, as favourite an entertainment then as at present, at Blackwall, the conversation after a time became literary, when Goldsmith took the opportunity of inveighing severely, as he had done in the *Chinese Letters*, against what he termed the class of pert and obscene novels, instancing the success of *Tristram Shandy* as derogatory to public taste. The cause of Sterne was taken up by others; several of the company joined in the argument which at length, among these volunteer allies became warm; from warmth they proceeded under the influence of wine to personalities and at length to violence, until the feast terminated in a general fight, when a mob being drawn around the house, the occurrence, though not the names of the combatants, found its way into the newspapers. Goldsmith, the innocent cause of the affray and whose disposition does not appear to have been pugnacious, is believed not to have been a sufferer on this occasion; the reputation of it however formed sufficient foundation for a sarcasm. And to this Johnson probably alluded when in the scuffle of the former, some years afterwards with Evans the publisher, Boswell observed that it was a new adventure for Goldsmith to be engaged in,—“Why, Sir, I believe it is the first time he has *beat*; he may have been *beaten* before. This, Sir, is a new pleasure to him.”

Of all his acquaintance, this extraordinary man—*clarum et venerabile nomen*—was the one most sedulously cultivated, and the most prized as he deserved to be for powers of a varied and gigantic order; who in return saw in Goldsmith much goodness as a man and great talents, to which he had borne ample testimony, as a writer. They took to each other to use Johnson's phrase with mutual good will; and nothing of more moment than casual ebullitions of temper in the heat of occasional argument occurred to interrupt it. Goldsmith, with a keen insight into character, could not but feel that respect which all who associated with Johnson were obliged to pay either from their admiration or their fears. He saw in the great moralist, to use his own words in the dedication of his play, “the greatest wit joined with the greatest piety;” from such a person who was nearly twenty years his senior, he could take a sharp rebuke or biting sarcasm (and who of all his friends escaped them?) without those feelings of resentment occasionally exhibited by inferior men. General opinion had long and justly stamped him the first literary character of the age; it was natural therefore for one who pursued literature as a profession to deem his acquaintance an advantage as well as an honour. From his experience and critical taste, it was scarcely possible not to profit; and by the respect which great talents combined with good morals ever command in

society, he felt that the friendship of one who stood pre-eminent in both formed of itself a passport to some degree of reputation.

There was another motive perhaps in seeking his intimacy; superior minds feel a noble spirit of emulation in the society of each other. Greatness indeed does not always produce greatness in the character of its associates; yet the near contemplation of excellence is not without its effect even on ordinary minds: we are prone to imitate what is placed before us, and by observation may gain similar advantages from the association with high moral or intellectual qualities, that manners derive from mingling in what is called good society. Eminent men too, it has been said usually live in clusters, in particular ages, and commonly in communion or friendly intercourse: passion or prejudice, or rivalry springing from the various contingencies of life, may disunite individuals, in such a body, but the majority as they understand the value of each other, are not often influenced by such antipathies. Few things could be more gratifying than to witness in social intercourse, that assemblage of talent of which Johnson and Goldsmith were among the prominent members.

Until about the period at which we are now arrived, it appears they were personally unacquainted. The fame of Johnson had been long established and found an echo in every society; the merits of Goldsmith were only whispered through the medium of mutual friends, yet so warmly as to produce the wished for acquaintance. He had shown himself not unworthy of the favour, by the terms in which the great moralist was mentioned in the *Reverie* in the fifth number of the *Bee*, and again in *Chinese Letters*, where speaking in his assumed eastern character we are told "their Johnsons and Smolletts are truly poets; though for aught I know they never made a single verse in their whole lives."

Their first meeting, according to the remembrance of Bishop Percy, took place on the 31st of May 1761, when Goldsmith gave a supper to a large company, chiefly literary men, at his lodgings in Wine-Office Court. Johnson among others was invited, and Percy as their mutual friend requested to accompany him. As they proceeded thither the latter had his attention drawn to the studied neatness of the critic's dress, far exceeding what he usually displayed. "He had on," said the Bishop in telling the story, "a new suit of clothes, a new wig nicely powdered, and every thing so dissimilar from his usual habits, that I could not resist the impulse of inquiring the cause of such rigid regard in him to exterior appearance. 'Why, Sir,' said he with characteristic shrewdness, and willing to play the instructor as well by example as by precept, 'I hear that Goldsmith, who is a very great sloven, justifies his disregard of cleanliness and decency by quoting my practice, and I am desirous this night to show him a better example.'"

From this time their intimacy increased until severed by that which terminates all human connexions. The lesson meant to be enforced by the improved garb of his new friend was not lost upon Goldsmith, if he were really open to the charge of personal negligence. Soon after this it will appear from the bills of his landlady,

and the account books from 1762 till 1774, of his tailor,* “honest John (he should have said William) Filby,” as he called him, whose name transpires in the amusing anecdote told by Boswell respecting the peach-coloured coat, that there was no want of clean linen, or of wearing apparel; and that in the latter he became ultimately expensive if not extravagant.

With Garrick his first meeting, it can scarcely be called acquaintance, appears to have been of a less friendly character; and took place if we are to believe Davies the biographer of the actor, and well acquainted with both, in the previous year, 1760, by an effort to secure some permanent means of support. A vacancy having occurred in the secretaryship of the Society of Arts which Goldsmith wished to obtain, he applied to the manager for his influence, which was represented to be considerable among the members. The latter urged in answer that Dr. Goldsmith having thought proper in one of his books to attack his management of the theatre, there could exist no fair claim to his good offices were there even no other candidate in the way. Instead of offering an apology, the Poet very bluntly observed that he had indulged in no personal reflections, and still thought he had only spoken the truth; they parted, however, in civility; and the election was carried by a large majority in favour of Dr. Chamberlayne.

This story may be correct in substance though not in detail. Davies, from his theatrical connexions and a variety of transactions with the Poet as a bookseller, possessed abundant opportunities of gaining the necessary information, but forgot or misapprehended what he had heard. It was not Dr. Chamberlayne who was elected in 1760, but Dr. Templeman; and in 1769 Mr. More succeeded to the same appointment; on neither of which occasions does Goldsmith's name appear as candidate, although others are mentioned, and the number of votes which each received. Neither does it appear that in his remarks on the conduct of the theatre in the work in question,† any manager is mentioned by name, or so pointedly by inference, as to give cause of personal offence; his remarks are general, though very little in the way of censure was sufficient to alarm the sensitive character of Garrick. The result of the interview showing him probably how little chance existed of success, the design was at once relinquished without proceeding to the vote; and this accounts for his name not appearing in the minutes on this occasion. He took much interest however in the Society, attended its proceedings very regularly for some years, and contrived as it appears on more than one occasion to pay his subscription by drawing upon his bookseller in advance. Among Newbery's papers are three memorandums of this kind; two in pencil, one dated April 30th, 1765, the others without dates:—“Lent Dr. Goldsmith, at the Society of Arts, and to pay arrears, 3*l.* 3*s.*”

* Communicated to the writer by Mr. John Filby his son, a respectable member of the corporation of London. Some of the items will be hereafter given.

† Inquiry into Polite Learning, Works, vol. i.

The success of our arms in the war then carrying on against France, formed a topic too exciting with the nation to be neglected by the booksellers; and several histories of the contest, of various shades of merit, appeared. To one of these he wrote a preface and also an introductory view of several of the chief states of Europe, mentioned in a preceding page with the memorandum prefixed to it of Isaac Reed; whether he took part in the compilation himself, or whether even it was actually published, a diligent search has failed to discover. It was written in 1761, and as appears by the context, previous to the rupture with Spain, the declaration of war against that country appearing in January 1762. A work of this nature had issued in February 1761,* from a publisher (Owen) for whom he had written one or more other prefaces; his skill in this class of composition being early discovered and frequently called into requisition. It appears likewise by a receipt from an agent of Guthrie, who was probably the compiler of the body of the work, dated February 2d 1762, that three guineas on account were paid him by Newbery for a "History of the War:" the book was a partnership affair, and therefore may have been the same.

The manuscript in his own handwriting and now before the writer, occupies nearly forty foolscap pages, closely written; eight being devoted to the preface, and the remainder to succinct notices of the political history, relations, and views of England, France, Prussia, Germany, and Holland: they contain many just and ingenious observations, and exemplify not merely the ease and flow of style, but the clearness of mind which he brought to the subject. Errors and inadvertencies, omission of names or dates, circumstances misstated by conflicting testimonies or introduced in the wrong place, are almost unavoidable in sitting down to the task of historical composition. We may expect to find in the first rude draught of such a work innumerable alterations; a blurred, blotted, and perhaps scarcely readable page; but it was not so with Goldsmith. Compelled often to write quickly and yet write well, and the means being wanting to enable him to employ an amanuensis, early enforced the necessity of methodizing his ideas so as to save the trouble of transcription; the erasures and alterations are therefore few and merely verbal. The same fact was noticed by Bishop Percy in the manuscript of his histories; a happiness which few even of the most ready and practised writers attain.

His orthography as has been remarked of other eminent men of

* "This day is published, neatly printed in one large volume, 8vo., price in boards 5s. 6d., A Complete History of the present War, from its Commencement in the Year 1756 to the end of the Campaign in 1760; in which all the Battles, Sieges, Sea-engagements, are faithfully related; with Historical and Military Remarks. Printed for L. Davis and C. Reymers in Holborn; W. Owen at Temple Bar; and J. Scott in Paternoster Row." Books of this description, as they are not now to be found in the regular marts for literature can only be met with by chance on the stalls; so that whether the preface in question be prefixed to it or to any other of a similar kind has not been determined.

the time,* is sometimes inaccurate, sometimes antiquated, exhibiting strong indications of haste and carelessness. Thus we have the words "comerce," "allarms," "oppulence," "inrich," "inforce," "efects," "ecchoes," "atractions," "comodities," "unactive," "undo," and others. It may be likewise remarked as such circumstances are often matters of curiosity, that he covers the page so thoroughly as to leave no room for note or addition on either margin had it been necessary for such to be introduced; on another occasion indeed, he declares distaste to notes as being commonly the marks of an unskilful writer.

The preface, too long to be transcribed here, but which will be found in the Works, is introduced by some general remarks on war as a source of occasional advantage and even of virtue to states, which are in a great degree new and ingenious, and explain some political phenomena operating not only in our own country in the present day, but in many of the states in Europe; that restlessness in nations, and that resistance to lawful authorities which a state of peace too often engenders. On the Dutch nation the remarks, whether correct or not, are such as he has versified in the *Traveler*.

The project of visiting the East, which had occupied his mind for a few previous and subsequent years, acquired new strength about this period by the accession of Lord Bute to office; some channel probably appearing through which to address that minister with a prospect of success. A memorial, enlarging the views formerly taken of this subject, was therefore drawn up, pointing out the advantages of a traveller proceeding thither for purposes of utility alone; and an impression prevailed among some of his acquaintance that the Princess-dowager of Wales had been prevailed upon to read and to approve of it. No favourable result ensued; the project being deemed visionary, or the name and influence of the proposer wanting sufficient weight among the public authorities to recommend him to such a mission. The Bishop of Dromore and Mr. Malone sought for this paper several years afterwards without success; and it is now probably irrecoverable.

Mr. Langton was accustomed to mention, in allusion to this scheme, that Goldsmith had long a visionary project that sometime or other when his circumstances should be easier, he would go to Aleppo in order to acquire a knowledge, as far as might be, of any arts peculiar to the East, and introduce them into Britain. When this was talked of in Dr. Johnson's company, he said, "Of all men Goldsmith is the most unfit to go out upon such an inquiry; for he is utterly ignorant of such arts as we already possess, and consequently could not know what would be accessions to our present stock of mechanical knowledge. Sir, he would bring home a grinding barrow,

* In the letters of Grainger the poet, in the possession of Mr. Mason and noticed in a previous page, we find, for instance, *inabled*, *wholy*, *aboad*, &c. The neglect of orthography among persons of good education and *fashion* in that day, not writers by profession, would now be considered disgraceful.

which you see in every street in London, and think that he had furnished a wonderful improvement."

In this sally there was more of sarcasm than of truth. The ambition of Goldsmith to profit by what he could find new in the East, could scarcely be deemed very absurd, when a contemplated scheme by Johnson to see the same country with more limited purposes was viewed with complacency by himself, and applause by his friends. "At the time when his pension was granted to him," observes Mr. Langton, "he said, with noble literary ambition,—'Had this happened twenty years ago, I should have gone to Constantinople to learn Arabic as Pocock did.'" Yet as the plan of Goldsmith necessarily included within its probable utility the study of the language and people without which he could not investigate their arts, it seems more like jealousy than justice in Johnson to ridicule in another, what at an earlier period of life confessedly formed a favourite wish of his own. The fact seems to have been either that Goldsmith had not thought it necessary to explain himself fully in the loose statements of conversation, or that he was imperfectly understood by his hearers. Of merely mechanical arts, his knowledge probably was not great, neither perhaps so contemptibly small as represented, for the term embraces a wide range of objects. Having long revolved the project, he was not likely to be wholly unprepared for what he knew and stated to be a laborious task, and diligent attendance upon the London Society devoted to such pursuits, implied at least a taste for, if not acquaintance with, some of the objects contemplated in the journey. It is more than probable that his design had reference chiefly to certain processes in the arts connected in some degree with chemistry, a science with which he possessed considerable acquaintance. Thus in the paper quoted on the occasion of his memorial to Lord Bute, he expressly mentions the extraction of spirit from milk, an improved mode of dying scarlet, and the refining of lead into a purer and more valuable metal, as matters for inquiry; an explanation which removes from his project that air of absurdity cast upon it by Johnson. The reputation of a man should not be at the mercy of a sarcasm; yet in the pages of Boswell as well as in the reports of others, it is obvious he did not receive credit for the information he really possessed, or the facility with which such as was necessary for his purpose was acquired.

The strongest objection to the expedition was not urged against it, namely that however ingenious in idea, the harvest gleaned would probably have been small. Mechanical arts publicly practised in one country soon find their way to others without an express mission to import them; while such as affect secrecy and are in the hands of a few, will be guarded still more carefully from the knowledge of one sent expressly to discover in what the secret or superiority consists. By the view taken in the extract previously quoted, of the other requisites for such a traveller,—a philosophical turn, a mind tinctured with miscellaneous knowledge, manners ameliorated by much intercourse with men, a body inured to fatigue, and a heart

not easily terrified at danger,—he obviously points to himself; nor if these be the chief qualifications required, was he deficient in any of them.*

CHAPTER XI.

Various Literary Engagements.—Pamphlet on the Cock Lane Ghost.—History of Meeklenburgh.—Art of Poetry.—Plutarch.—Citizen of the World.—Additions to a History of England.—Life of Beau Nash.—Lines supposed to be written at Orpington.—Christian's Magazine.—Robin Hood Society.—Peter Annet.—Lloyd.—Roubiliac.

EARLY in 1762, Newbery found him variety of occupation in history, biography, the critical revision of several works, and even on a subject which although made of importance by popular excitement and credulity, by the personal inquiries of Johnson, and by the satire of Churchill, was beneath the serious notice of either: this was the well known imposture of the Cock Lane Ghost. His receipt for the very moderate amount of copy-money in his own handwriting, now before the writer, is as follows:—

“Received from Mr. Newbery three guineas for a pamphlet respecting the Cock Lane Ghost. OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

“March 5, 1762.”

None of the newspaper announcements of the day state any thing on this absorbing topic as issuing from the shop of the apparent purchaser, and the precise title of the piece has not been therefore ascertained. It may perhaps have been a partnership affair; and as Newbery had occasional connexion with Bristow, a neighbouring publisher, in other works, he may on this occasion likewise have been made the channel of publication; an impression countenanced by the advertisement of a pamphlet on the subject which appeared from that source shortly before.† Things of this kind commonly dis-

* By the account of Dr. Farr in conversation with the Poet when they met in London in 1756, his idea then was a journey to the Weitten Mountains. It is rather a curious coincidence, that, at this moment, another gentleman distinguished by his eccentricities, Edward Wortley Montague, entertained and accomplished the same design. He set off from Italy toward the end of 1762, and was absent about three years, travelling through the Holy Land, Egypt, and Armenia, with the Old and New Testaments in hand, finding them, as he says, unerring guides. An account of this journey was read before the Royal Society in March, 1766, and afterwards published in their Transactions.

† “To-morrow will be published, price 1s. The Mystery Revealed: containing a Series of Transactions and authentic Memorials respecting the supposed Cock Lane Ghost, which have hitherto been concealed from the Public.

‘Since now the living dare implead,
Arraign him! in the person of the dead.’

DRYDEN.

“Printed for W. Bristow in St. Paul’s Churchyard.”—*Public Advertiser*, Feb. 22, 1762.

appear with the thirst for wonders to which they owe their origin; but if found, internal evidence will readily decide whether the conjecture of this being Goldsmith's performance be well founded.

One of the labours for his patron if we may believe the accounts of several personal acquaintance, for no certain evidence of the fact is at hand and the work has been sought in vain, was a volume to which the popularity of the young Queen (Charlotte) gave origin. In February (26th,) 1762, appeared, dedicated to her Majesty, "The History of Mecklenburgh from the first Settlement of the Vandals in that Country to the present Time; including a Period of about Three Thousand Years." It was diligently advertised, though without marked success, having failed to reach a second edition, which can be said of no other of his (if this really be his) compilations. Probably he revised rather than wrote it, or received so little for the volume as to be indifferent to its fate; for in the British Magazine where a better character might have been secured had he cared about the matter, it is simply noticed as "carefully compiled, but dry and uninteresting."

A few days afterwards (March 9th) came out in two volumes "The Art of Poetry on a new Plan; illustrated with a great Variety of Examples from the best English Poets." This was a compilation by Newbery himself, revised, altered, and enlarged by the critical and poetical taste of Goldsmith, as he acknowledged to Dr. Percy. The dedication however to the Earl of Holderness, in return for an act of beneficence shown in his capacity of Secretary of State to a distressed foreigner on the application of the good-natured bookseller, is not only signed by the latter but obviously written by him in the fulness of gratitude. Neither has the advertisement traces of Goldsmith's usual point and spirit; however desirous therefore of his aid in the prefatory matter to books by other writers as a means of success, Newbery, with something of the vanity of an author, felt no such diffidence about the merits of his own.

As a guide to youth in the cultivation of poetry, whether as a study or an amusement, these volumes as giving the opinions of competent critics upon the merits of good authors are by no means contemptible. The preceptive part tells all that it is necessary to tell regarding an art which cannot be taught, and in which more than in most others precept is nearly useless. The illustrations are numerous, of great variety, and drawn commonly from the best sources. It is no reproach that much of the information is borrowed; but if the alleged compiler found time from his numerous avocations in trade to collect and arrange the observations scattered through the work on the merits of the various species of poetry he deserves credit for no ordinary diligence. But the remarks by which the specimens are introduced are often so original and just, in such good taste, and conveyed in so perspicuous a style, that it is probable a better critic and an abler writer than Newbery, however fair his talents, must have not merely revised but in part added to, or rewritten them.

Almost at the same moment (March 12,) a new work for a similar (the juvenile) class of readers was announced from the same prolific source.

“Mr. Newbery begs leave to offer to the young gentlemen and ladies of these kingdoms a Compendium of Biography; or a History of the Lives of those Great Personages, both ancient and modern, who are most worthy of their Esteem and Imitation, and most likely to inspire their Minds with a Love of Virtue.” The plan, after something more in the same strain, was to commence with Plutarch; to be comprised in seven volumes, 18mo., one to appear every month at the moderate sum of eighteen pence; and with the further promise of being “abridged from the original Greek, with notes and reflections.”

The compiler of this humble contribution to knowledge was Goldsmith. Biography was with him as with Johnson a favourite subject, had he enjoyed the requisite leisure for inquiring into those details without which its value is much diminished. From the present attempt he could derive nothing but the marketable value of the article, and this from the acknowledgment for two volumes appears to have been small; but by the manner in which they were got up in paper and embellishments, the publisher gave his project scarcely a chance of success had the intrinsic merit been greater. The first volume appeared on the 1st of May, the last in November, when the series ceased as it begun with the Greek biographer; the intention of carrying on the original design being probably damped by the success of a competitor, the British Plutarch, then in course of publication by Dilly. After the first four volumes had been completed, he procured in consequence of illness, the assistance of Mr. Joseph Collyer whose name appears in a preceding page, and who found employment in some compilations of the time and in translations from the German, one of which, the Noah of Bodmer, was given after the manner of the Death of Abel. The receipt from the Poet for the sum awarded to his labours was in advance of the publication; and seems, from several others of similar date and given on the same sheet of paper, to have been a kind of general settling day between author and bookseller.

“Received from Mr. Newbery eleven guineas and a half for an abridgment of Plutarch’s Lives.

“OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

“March 5, 1762.”

During the progress of the work through the press the following note without date, seems to have been written to prevent any delay in publication in consequence of his indisposition:—

“*To Mr. Newbery, St. Paul’s Churchyard.*

“DEAR SIR,

“As I have been out of order for some time past, and am still not

quite recovered, the fifth volume of Plutarch's *Lives* remains unfinished. I fear I shall not be able to do it unless there be an actual necessity, and that none else can be found. If therefore you would send it to Mr. Collier, I should esteem it a kindness, and pay for whatever it may come to.—N. B. I received twelve guineas for the two volumes.

"I am, Sir, your obliged,
"Humble servant,

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"Pray let me have an answer."

From an impression probably that the work would not be so well done by any one else, this proposal seems not to have been acceded to at the moment, although Collyer was ultimately employed; and under the feeling of being urged to do what his strength scarcely permitted, he despatched a second and less cordial note.

"*To Mr. Newbery.*

"SIR,

"One volume is done, namely, the fourth. When I said I should be glad Mr. Collier* would do the fifth for me I only demanded it as a favour, but if he cannot conveniently do it, though I have kept my chamber these three weeks, and am not quite recovered, yet I will do it. I send it per bearer; and if the affair puts you to the least inconvenience, return it, and it shall be done immediately.

"I am, &c.

"O. G.

"The printer has the copy of the rest."

His connexion with this little work although disclosed after his death by Newbery's successors in trade, has been since unnoticed and even unknown: the knowledge of it reached the writer among other traditional notices, and on reference to the preliminary advertisement, the pen of the Poet became immediately obvious to him long previous† to the preceding documents, which may be more satisfactory to others, coming into his hands. But there are persons, and Goldsmith himself seems to have been of the number, who think it injudicious to make known whatever an author himself desires to conceal or does not avow; that his anonymous, hasty, or casual performances should pass without challenge from any quarter; that in short the world has a right to know and notice only such of his productions as are written for reputation and not for bread.

Yet this can scarcely be a sound opinion. Were it strictly to be followed, literary history would no longer possess its strongest interest. We should lose the advantages derived from tracing step by

* This gentleman's name was usually spelt "Collyer."

† Nearly three years.

step the progress of mind in its advances to perfection; of knowing its labours and struggles on the path to eminence; what small objects were accomplished before great ones were attempted; what subjects employed the pen or the thoughts of a distinguished writer at a particular epoch of his career; and aspiring though obscure worth would lose the benefit derived from tracking their great predecessors in the road to distinction, and want the best stimulus to pursue their example by learning not to despair, for that fame is rarely the result of a moment or of chance, but of time and industry. The pride of authors is something like that of beauties; it may induce them to wish to be seen only in their finished works as the latter prefer being exhibited in full dress when tricked out for show or conquest: but those they would influence or subdue have a right to more intimate acquaintance, and must not be thought impertinently curious in seeking it. There is a youth in authorship as in life; and we would inquire whether the period of immaturity has been idly or laboriously spent. It is not necessary we should approve the species of labour pursued, but we like to know what was the employment of the labourer.

His characteristic address in propitiating the favour of the reader is displayed in the recommendatory notice.

"Biography has ever since the days of Plutarch been considered as the most useful manner of writing, not only from the pleasure it affords the imagination but from the instruction it artfully and unexpectedly conveys to the understanding. It furnishes us with an opportunity of giving advice freely and without offence. It not only removes the dryness and dogmatical air of precept, but sets persons, actions, and their consequences, before us in the most striking manner; and by that means turns even precept into example.

"The perverseness, folly, and pride of men, seldom suffer advice given in the common manner to be effectual. Nor is this to be wondered at; for though there is no action in life that requires greater delicacy, yet few are conducted with less. The advice of parents and preceptors is generally given in an austere and authoritative manner which destroys the feelings of affection; and that of friends, by being frequently mixed with asperity and reproof, seems rather calculated to exalt their own wisdom than to amend our lives, and has too much the appearance of a triumph over our defects.

"Councils therefore as well as compliments are best conveyed in an indirect and oblique manner; and this renders biography as well as fable a most convenient vehicle for instruction. An ingenious gentleman was asked what was the best lesson for youth? he answered, *The life of a good man*. Being again asked what was the next best? replied, *The life of a bad one*. The first would make him in love with virtue, and teach him how to conduct himself through life so as to become an ornament to society and a blessing to his family and friends; and the last would point out the hateful and horrid consequences of vice, and make him careful to avoid those actions which appeared so detestable in others."

The same day that introduced Plutarch brought forth in two duodecimo volumes, as the newspapers announced, "The Citizen of the World; or Letters from a Chinese Philosopher residing in London, to his friends in the East. *Printed for the Author:*"—the only intimation of a similar kind attached to any of his publications. Newbery may have at first declined republishing what had sufficiently answered his purpose in the Ledger; but when about to issue from the press he appears from the following either to have become the purchaser or to have paid up an outstanding account, as the old not the new title is employed. The whole amount given does not appear.

"Received of Mr. Newbery five guineas, which, with what I have received at different times before, is in full for the copy of the Chinese Letters, as witness my hand.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"March 5, 1762."

The relinquishment of the original designation Chinese Letters which was applied as it would seem rather by others than by the author as it is assumed rather by the editor than by him, arose probably from a production of the Marquis D'Argens, translated into English 1741, being extant under the same title; a coincidence likewise to be remarked of two other works indebted to his pen, "The Bee," and the "British Magazine," both of which names had been previously used for popular compilations. The idea commonly implied by the designation now assumed for the volumes, that of a person so attached, or so indifferent, to all countries as to give particular preference to none, is noticed with approbation in more than one passage in his Essays. "Among all the famous sayings of antiquity," he writes in the British Magazine, "there is none that does greater honour to the author, or affords greater pleasure to the reader (at least if he be a person of a generous and benevolent heart,) than that of the philosopher, who being asked what countryman he was, replied, "A Citizen of the World." And again, "I must own I should prefer the title of the ancient philosopher, viz. a Citizen of the World, to that of an Englishman, a Frenchman, a European, or to any other appellation whatever."

Philosophical fallacies equally specious and quite as unsound as this have been often adopted by men who knew better; misled for the moment by insufficient consideration, the pretension of a character imposing in name to the ignorant, or possibly deceived by real benevolence of disposition. Yet it is difficult to think that any who advanced the opinions just quoted really believed in their justness; the common feelings of human nature rise up in judgment against the theory, and the first practical effort we are called upon to make, of benevolence for instance or preference in any way, shows its insufficient foundation. It can scarcely be true that any person exists who has no preference of country, and if true, not perhaps very creditable to him who avows it. Providence seems

to have ordered that our affections move within certain circles, first our family, second our neighbourhood, and thirdly our country, and no great good may be expected to arise from forgetting either of these, our natural and proper care, to assume His province in extending equal attachment to places and persons of whom we can know little. It may be true that an individual does not prefer his native land, but all lands cannot be equally indifferent. If we totally disconnect from our minds the tie of country, we may do the same with that of kindred, and advancing a step further in heartless philosophy, proceed to sever all the links of human connexion. That benevolence which is so general and indiscriminate as to affect to embrace all mankind, is commonly to be suspected: it is seldom seen exerted where most wanted, that is in the active aid of individuals composing the community for which regard is professed in the gross: like a small portion of manure spread over a large tract of soil, the fructifying power is lost—it wants concentration. Such philosophy is indeed but a shadow which in pursuing, may deprive us of the substance of much practical good; its tendency is to loosen what may be called the local, yet powerful and kindlier, affections of our nature.

Besides the letters printed in the newspaper series, other papers deemed worthy of being preserved and which had appeared either in a different form or in other publications, were introduced into the volumes, in order as it was avowed to make the work more perfect. Thus, No. 108, *The Advantages of sending a Traveller into Asia to bring back the useful Knowledge of that Country*, No. 115, *On the Dignity of Human Nature*, and a few more, are from the *Ledger*; No. 117, *A City Night-piece*, from the *Bee*; No. 119, *The Distresses of a Common Soldier*, from the *British Magazine*; and there are others taken from the newspaper during the year 1761. Several, where the subjects appeared to be connected, were transposed on republication from the places in which they originally stood in the series and a few were added wholly new.

No aid seems to have been given him by the contributions of others, and indeed there is presumptive evidence of the fact in the progress of the letters, although a contrary belief prevailed at the time. Thus, in the *British Magazine*—and it exhibits some disregard for the common arts of literary puffing that in a publication with which he was connected no more favourable or extended criticism appeared—it is laconically characterized, “Light, agreeable summer reading, partly original, partly borrowed.” A similar impression is to be drawn from the qualified terms used in an advertisement in the *London Chronicle* in May, 1766—“The greater part of this work was written by Dr. Goldsmith.” The error in both instances of giving him credit for the authorship only in part, arose from having reclaimed his labours from other quarters without the critics who had seen them there being aware of his right of appropriation. The publisher at length thought it necessary to intimate in one of his announcements that all were the offspring of one author:—“These volumes contain all those Chinese Letters which gave so

much pleasure and satisfaction in the Public Ledger, together with such originals as were necessary to complete the author's design."

The fortune of books as indicative of public negligence or caprice, has often been the subject of remark; and this edition of one, popular in its first form and ever since admitted to possess all the qualities deserving of favour, may be instanced, among others. It did not sell in the manner expected, either from the change of title rendering it less generally known, or from wanting the countenance of an approved name. No intimation of a second impression appears so late as May 1766, when the name of the author then rendered popular by the success of the Traveller was used in order to dispose of the first; and a third edition did not come out till about 1780. While neglected at home however the Citizen of the World found favour abroad:—a French translation by M. Poivre, who sent Goldsmith a copy in addition to a very complimentary letter which disappeared among others of his papers after death, came out in 1763, and in three years passed through four editions in that country.

Shortly after this period, another effort of industry in the service of the booksellers is known by the following acknowledgment:—

"Received two guineas of Mr. Newbery, for the conclusion of the English History.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"July 7th, 1762."

A second memorandum gives him credit among other copies though without a price affixed, for "79 leaves of the History of England." Attentive examination among the publications of the day has probably ascertained the exact nature of this historical fragment, which was of no value and therefore not necessary to rescue from oblivion. A school-book, a History of England in the form of question and answer, had been published as joint property* by several booksellers, and proving successful, additions were thought necessary to raise it still further in estimation. An announcement of September 23, has this notice affixed:—"The 11th edition, with the addition of five sheets, containing the long and glorious reign of our late most glorious sovereign, George the Second, to the accession of his present Majesty." The five sheets thus added would amount within one, to the exact number of pages, or as it is written leaves, noted in the publisher's account.

In the summer of 1762 he visited Bath; partly for the restoration of health, partly it is said by desire of Newbery, in order to add to a small stock of materials already collected and shaped into form for a new publication,—an account of the well known Beau Nash, Master of the Ceremonies there, who had died at an advanced age and after a long tenure of office the preceding year.

It is not often that gentlemen of this profession make claims upon the biographer. Necessity could be the sole inducement to the un-

* The proprietors were Hawes, Woodfall, Newbery, Baldwin, and others.

dertaking, for of such a person what more could be said than a newspaper paragraph might tell? But Nash possessed a species of conventional celebrity that rendered him not only an object of general notice and conversation, but made him the first of his class who have figured in this country. In the mingled characters of gamester, (said indeed to be a generous one,) beau, a man of pleasure, a reputed wit, and the king as he was called, or improver if not founder of a favourite scene of summer resort for the wealthy and the fashionable, the invalid and the idle, he was known personally or by name to most persons in the kingdom. Fame therefore would seem to appertain not solely to the able or the great. To gratify curiosity respecting one so much talked of, who retained his sway to a patriarchal age, there appeared on the 14th of October, 1762, "The Life of Richard Nash, Esq., late Master of the Ceremonies at Bath. Extracted principally from his original Papers.

———Non ego paucis
Offendar maculis.

Hon."

Notwithstanding the numerous stories told of this gentleman, some address was required to make out a respectable volume, the facts communicated being few, and even these considered to be in want of a guarantee of authenticity, which the publisher found it expedient to give. "We have the permission of George Scott, Esq. (who kindly undertook to settle the affairs of Mr. Nash for the benefit of his family and creditors,) to assure the public that all the papers found in the custody of Mr. Nash, which any ways respected his life, and were thought interesting to the public, were communicated to the editor of this volume; so that the reader will at least have the satisfaction of perusing an account that is genuine, and not the work of imagination, as biographical writings too commonly are."

Among the papers thus said to be given is a long communication on the destructive vice of gaming, supposed to be written by a correspondent of Nash, but more probably by the editor, whose admonitions on the subject are impressive; one or two more letters by the Duchess of Marlborough and Pope; and the history of a young lady apparently well known at that time, who terminated a life somewhat equivocal by suicide. The reflections are numerous and ingenious; said indeed to constitute the chief part of a book, the whole of which indicated a practised hand. By some it was said to have been written in imitation of Johnson's *Life of Savage*; but of this there is no other trace or resemblance than that Goldsmith, like Johnson, tried how much could be made out of slender materials by a skilful workman. Savage however was a poet whose writings, imprudences, and birth, afforded themes to discuss, follies to lament, and misfortunes to commiserate: Nash could but boast of being a mere *arbiter ineptiarum*, whose highest effort of mind was a jest, and engaged in occupations too trifling for serious description. With such opposite subjects to treat, no competition

could exist between the authors. By a memorandum among Newbery's papers, it appears that Johnson had curiosity enough to purchase the book though we have no record of his opinion; and early in December it reached a second edition.

Among his critics was Lloyd, then editor of the *St. James's Magazine*, who thus adverts to its want of incident:—"If the good-natured editor, did not step in upon all occasions, the public must have been contented with a pamphlet instead of a book."

But an imputation contained in the volume upon Quin, the actor, who had retired from the stage and resided in Bath, formed the subject of sharper strictures, either from the pen of the critic or one of his correspondents. Among the alleged papers of Nash were found a letter, wretchedly spelt, said to be written by Quin to a nobleman soliciting his assistance in the design of supplanting the Master of the Ceremonies in his situation, which letter through some means had been communicated to the object of the supposed plot by being found in his possession; it was no doubt one of those vulgar deceptions called a hoax, played off upon Nash as a source of annoyance, for though aged and irritable, he was still assuming and vain. In the *Magazine* instead of being viewed in this light, it was dwelt upon as a calumny of the biographer upon the actor; and in addition to other animadversions, produced an epigram rather more abusive than severe, which as the war of wits forms a fruitful source of amusement to all but the combatants, is subjoined for that of the reader.*

His own estimate of the value of his labours, as exhibited in the preface and introductory remarks, is sufficiently moderate: they exhibit his usual ingenuity in making a graceful apology for introducing what he knew to be a trifling subject. Few who now read this volume, and it is sometimes taken up by such as search for anecdotes of the past age,† are aware of Goldsmith being the author; the fact though known soon after publication and mentioned by contemporaries, seems, like others of his labours to be nearly obliterated from recollection. Five weeks are reported to have been spent on the composition; and if we consider the ingenuity demanded to make a

* "*To the Editor of Nash's Life.*"

"Think'st thou that Quin, whose parts and wit
Might any station grace,
Could e'en such ribald stuff have writ,
Or wish'd for Nash's place?"

"With scorn we read thy senseless trash,
And see thy toothless grin,
For Quin no more could sink to Nash,
Than thou canst rise to Quin."

† The subject was lately dramatized with some degree of success by Mr. Jerrold: he was not aware probably of the authority to whom he was obliged. A book appeared a year or two after the *Life*, called "*Nash's Jests*," in which Goldsmith had no share. The compiler, from a memorandum of Newbery seems to have been Mr. Griffith Jones.

readable book on such a subject, and the trouble of even transcribing two hundred and forty octavo pages, he would appear by the following, to have been very poorly remunerated. By the date, it seems to have been given in advance.

"Received from Mr. Newbery at different times, and for which gave receipts, fourteen guineas, which is in full for the copy of the Life of Mr. Nash.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"March 5, 1762."

By the preceding account, we discover that he did not want diligence; and as much of his future life exhibits similar struggles of labour with necessity, the accusation of idleness sometimes urged against him will appear to be undeserved. A charge of this kind applied to a literary man, and it is one of frequent occurrence, is not always easy, however unjust it may be in itself, to rebut. His moments of relaxation commonly admit of general notice; while those of study, of intense perhaps and long-continued meditation, are necessarily unseen; the amusement of an hour by such as judge hastily, may be exaggerated into the negligence of a day; and those to whom he has incurred pecuniary obligation and who impatiently look for repayment, are prone perhaps to consider as an idler him who is simply a debtor. Yet mental labour as much more exhausting than bodily, requires proportionate indulgence: the rest of a night fits the labourer or mechanic for the occupations of the following day; but months may be requisite to restore tone and vigour to the mind exhausted in the completion of a literary performance.

The illness alluded to in the note regarding Plutarch and other attacks which it appears he had previously experienced, arose from a painful disease brought on by constant application to his desk. To escape this drudgery, short excursions were made into the country whenever an interval of leisure permitted: Tunbridge and Bath were among his favourite places of resort; and sometimes lodgings were taken a short distance from London, where when not required for the necessary duty of correcting the press, he could work undisturbed for short periods. One of these in 1760 and 1761 was remembered to be in the village of Orpington in Kent, where some lines said to be written on the window of a cottage he frequented, and which appeared in the British Magazine, were, it cannot now be known with what truth, attributed to him.* A similar effusion of his genius or

* "Stay, traveller; and though within
Nor gold nor glittering gems are seen,
To strike the ravish'd eye,
Yet enter, and thy well-pleased mind,
Beneath this humble roof shall find,
What gold can never buy.
Within this solitary cell,
Calm thought and sweet contentment dwell,
Parents of bliss sincere:
Peace spreads abroad her balmy wings,
And, banish'd from the courts of kings,
Has fixed her mansion here."

whim was mentioned by the late Sir George Beaumont, as having been left at a village inn when travelling in Leicestershire, but the name of the place as well as the lines were forgotten.

A translation of the works of Voltaire commenced in 1761, and continued monthly for about two years, under the names of Smollett, the Rev. Dr. Francklin and others, and of which Newbery was one of the proprietors, was supposed to have given occasional occupation to Goldsmith. No proof of this however has been found: the papers of that publisher state the price paid for the translation to be two guineas per sheet; and in giving the expenses of each volume for the information of the partners, the entry simply is without giving names, "Author 25 $\frac{1}{2}$;" varying according to the size of the volume to 26 $\frac{1}{2}$. and 27 $\frac{1}{2}$. The work is still met with in the shops, and a slight inspection sufficiently proves he did not write the preface, which is deficient in the usual characteristics of his manner. The writings of such an author as Voltaire were probably thought capable of recommending themselves.

A more certain depository of his occasional contributions appears to have been another monthly publication of Newbery, "The Christian's Magazine," edited at this time or soon afterward by the unfortunate Dr. Dodd, several of whose letters connected with it are still in existence.* What description of pieces were supplied by him at

* Various memorandums of their accounts, besides the subjoined, exist, from which it appears that seven guineas was the sum received by Dr. Dodd for each number of the Magazine.

"The Rev. Mr. Dodd's account.									
15 Nos. Magazine, a	£7	7	0	-	-	-	-	-	£110 5 0
2 Supplements - - a	4	4	0	-	-	-	-	-	- 8 8 0
									<hr/>
									118 13 0
125 Visitors, &c. - - a	0	6	0	-	-	-	-	-	37 10 0
									<hr/>
									£156 3 0
Stated August 21st, 1761. Jno. Newbery.									
Paid drafts - -	£183	0	0						
By the above - -	156	3	0						
<hr/>									
Due to J. N. £26 17 0."									

A few letters of this clever but unhappy man, connected with this Magazine and other literary designs or engagements, may not be without interest for the reader. The first appears to have been written in 1764, and they indicate the existence of those pecuniary difficulties to which his lamentable end is to be attributed.

"DEAR SIR,

"It gave me very sensible concern to hear you were so indifferent. I wish by consulting your friends in the physical way, you could meet with some relief.

"With respect to Dr. Lowth's Prelections, I have more to say to you when we meet, which I hope will be soon, as we come to town on Friday; when, or any day you please, I shall be glad to see you at the chaplain's table, or at our house next door to the royal Jelly House, Pall Mall. As to Sir Roger, I repeat again what I said at first, that if you can make any thing out of it, it is quite at your disposal. I should be glad you would take it wholly under your management, that I might hear no more of it, but as conducted by you; and if you should like the proposal, the papers, scheme, &c. are all at your service for one hundred pounds; for which sum I will entirely give it up, and wish it may be rendered useful and profitable to you. I am really ashamed to be so troublesome to you, but upon my removal, I am

this time we have no means of ascertaining, probably moral stories and serious essays appropriate to the work; but in the following

a little straitened; and should not the above proposal be acceptable, should esteem myself greatly obliged to you for £80; which if I do not work out from the things already done (the *Christian Religion Vindicated*, &c.,) I should be glad to give you a note for, or a Bible, or any other account. If you can oblige me, I will draw by Mr. Perchard in ten days after sight.

"Pray what do you think of my employing Mr. Butler, in translating the lives of the modern philosophers by Savarien? I believe it will come into 2 vols. 8vo. I should be glad that, in advertising the *Christian's Mag.* this month, it might be said, "In the *Christian's Mag.* for this month a translation is given of the learned Professor Hoffman's celebrated Treatise concerning lengthening the *Lives of Students by Regimen.*" Mrs. Dodd begs her compliments to Mrs. Newbery, and will be glad to see her in Pall Mall.

"I am ever yours,

"W. DODD.

"West Ham, Oct. 28.

"I should be glad of an answer soon as is convenient."

"DEAR SIR,

"I have drawn as usual for £22, and must now request of you and the partners in the Bible that you will be so obliging as to answer that draft for a £100, which you was so good as to accept for me. After this I will trouble you and them no more on the Bible account till the end of the year, and therefore I hope you will not judge my request unreasonable. I should be glad you would send me word, whether you would have Mr. B. proceed on *Herbelot*: that if you think it will not answer, we may employ him at leisure hours in something more likely to succeed, and it would be a favour if you could think of any such work. Be so good as to order your people to find me the volumes of Buffon, when it is convenient. And when your search into our laborious journals is finished, please to return them to, dear Sir,

"Your very sincere and obliged friend,

"W. DODD.

"West Ham, April 6, 1765.

"Oct. 31, 1765. One month to Perchard, £80 0 0."

"DEAR SIR,

"I have expected often the pleasure of seeing you, but how have I been disappointed! Surely you and Mrs. Newbery must have mistaken something, and if so we are sorry, and desire to make amends, or we should have seen some of you in Pall Mall. I have drawn 14 days after date for £26. As life is uncertain with us both, I should be glad to settle some books, &c. had on my own account (not the Magazine) from your shop: I know not what they may come to; but if you please, I will assign to you the property of the *Reflections on Death* and the Truth of the *Christian Religion*, and give mutual receipts on both sides. If not, as shall be most agreeable to you. I am,

"Dear Sir,

"Very sincerely yours,

"W. D.

"Pall Mall, Jan. 27, 1766"

"DEAR SIR,

"I should be the last man in the world to wish you to carry on any thing to your prejudice, and therefore must acquiesce in what you have said respecting the *Christian's Magazine*; but I could have wished that it had been dropped in a less abrupt manner, or that you had been pleased to have given me more time to have consulted about it; as I should be extremely happy to continue it if I could, as I had great pleasure in the work; at least, I could have wished to have seen this volume completed. I have therefore only to request of you, that you will undertake the publication of the number of this month, for which I am so far from desiring any thing on my own part, that I will very readily pay you any balance of loss on the sale,

year he furnished two or more translations, which will be noticed in the proper place. Griffiths Jones, it appears, compiled the monthly compendium of miscellaneous intelligence for the very moderate remuneration of a guinea each number.

Toward the end of the year he contemplated a popular compilation on Philosophy, induced by the persuasions of his indefatigable employer, who perceived that such works, when tolerably well executed found a ready reception from the inquiring spirit of the age. He had previously revised there is reason to believe, some works on this subject by Martin, a philosophical instrument-maker of Fleet Street; and though necessarily deficient in practical acquaintance with such subjects, conceived himself theoretically at least not uninformed. The chief facts, were meant to be drawn from the most recent and competent sources, while much was anticipated in de-

and for the future, I will give you no more trouble concerning it. I once before mentioned, that there being an account standing between us for books, &c. I should be extremely glad for both our sakes to have it settled; and I mentioned that if you judged it right, I was willing to give you a receipt in full for the copies you have had of mine, and to receive the same from your hands. I am very sorry to hear your gouty complaint is still so troublesome to you: it will give me great pleasure to find you better; for there is nobody who wishes your welfare more truly than

"Dear Sir,

"Yours affectionately,

"W. DODD.

"Southampton Row,
14th July, 1767."

Mr. John Newbery had died in the interval between the above and the following.

"Dr. Dodd's compliments to Mr. T. Newbery. He is a little surprised at seeing the *Christian's Magazine* advertised as *printed for the author*; which he begs may be altered, as it was published upon the plan of the rest, by the appointment, and at the desire of the late Mr. Newbery; and who also, contrary to Dr. Dodd's opinion, chose to make it 1s. price.

"Southampton Row,
2d Feb. 1768."

Southampton Row, 6th Jan. 1769.

"SIR,

"You receive some books by the bearer, of which those marked with a X were had for the general business of the *Magazine*, and were to be returned; for the rest, they are what I can find out of the number had for the current business of the work; which certainly are my property,—if such property were worth the claiming,—and for which I do not consider myself as at all accountable. However, what I have returned are at your service, to make the best of them. Some others mentioned in your account were returned long ago: those which be long to my own account, I have marked with red ink. Mr. Butler, no more than myself, remembers any thing of a message forbidding the publication of "*The Truth of Christianity*." Nay, I do venture positively to declare, that no such message was ever sent by me or my order; and in this state of things, I repeat, what I before offered, and that I am willing, in order to save trouble on both sides, to give and take a receipt in full; that is to say, these books being returned to me, which I now send, be they valued as they may, and the set of *Buffon's* being made up complete so far as you have them. I cannot help observing what I did before, that the books throughout the account are all very highly charged, and certainly beyond their worth. I shall be very ready to unite in any undertaking which may render your interest in the *Christian's Magazine* more important; and shall be glad at all times to show my great regard for my late friend Mr. Newbery, by any means in my little power. I am, Sir,

"Your very humble servant,

"W. DODD.

scription and mode of arrangement from the taste and genius of the compiler. To prepare for the undertaking a course of philosophical reading was commenced, and various additions made to his library with the same view, so that however defective such cheap compendiums of knowledge may be, more diligence is often used in the getting them up than their compilers received credit for from the learned. The fruits of these studies will be hereafter noticed; for the present they made little progress in consequence of other and more attractive employment of an historical nature. Newbery's memorandum of the books now supplied to him in order to furnish part of the necessary information is as follows:—

Nov. 25, 1762.

“Lent Dr. Goldsmith.

- 1 Martin's Philosophy, 3 vols. 8vo.
- 1 Kiel's Introduction.
- 1 Macquart's Chemistry, 3 vols. French.
- 1 Encyclopædia, 8 vols. folio. French.
- 1 Chinese Letters. French.
- 1 Persian Ditto.
- 1 Pemberton's View of Newton's Philosophy.
- 1 Hale's Vegetable Statics, 2 vols. 8vo.
- 1 Ferguson's Astronomy, 4to.
- 1 Buffon's Natural History, 9 vols. 4to.
- 1 The Origin of Laws, Arts, and Sciences, 3 vols. 8vo. Edinburgh.”

Ready as we find him upon such a variety of subjects, it may be doubted considering the manner in which the literature was then remunerated, whether the amount of money received formed even a tolerable income. He boasted on one occasion of being able to make four guineas by the labour of a day: this may have been true, as such sums were occasionally paid for prefaces and introductions that might have been thrown off within that time. Authors perhaps desire even when not strictly authorized by fact, to have the reputation of large sums affixed to their productions; and the desire is not less strong in those of the present day than in the past. Publishers likewise form an interested party in such statements, for while the vanity of the one is flattered, the property of the other is thought to be enhanced, as that is necessarily inferred to be good, the cost of which has been great. Yet if these representations were always correct, we should scarcely find those who afford currency to such rumours furnishing proofs in their conduct or their complaints of frequently suffering under the evils of an unprofitable profession.

It may be a source of curiosity therefore to trace his income as far as can be ascertained, during this year of acknowledged industry. The pamphlet on the Cock Lane Ghost as appears was three guineas; the history of Mecklenburgh if he were actually the author may be estimated by the value of the other works at twenty pounds; revising the Art of Poetry ten pounds; seven volumes of Plutarch forty-five pounds; Citizen of the World probably ten or fifteen pounds; five sheets of the History of England two guineas; Life of Nash fourteen guineas; occasional pieces, such as Essays, Prefaces, and Criticisms, perhaps twenty pounds, making together less than one hundred and

twenty pounds. When we consider the time required for these various works, it is not probable he could have written any thing of moment for another publisher; and there is little doubt as we find in the instance of Collyer, that he occasionally paid for assistance. With this deduction from small means there might still be something left for a strict economist, though little to gratify the pride of literature; and in all the labours of the year there was nothing conducive in any degree to fame. Yet without some latent hope of futurity having better prospects in store, the vague though encouraging impression that at a more favourable moment genius would take wing in nobler and more enduring flights, who would devote himself to drudgery like this, at once constant, solitary and ill-requited?

Occasionally we find him mingling in scenes of amusement, or pursuing objects of popular curiosity; frequently as we may believe from his remarks in order to turn them in some way to account. One of these in the summer of 1762, was the Cherokee chiefs then in London and sought after eagerly by the inquisitive and idle, a visit to whom gave origin to a humorous story told by Derrick, well known by his poems and letters and once master of the ceremonies at Bath. Having made a present of some trifle to one of the Indians during the interview, the latter, delighted with the gift and remembering one of the European modes of endearment, stooped and embraced Goldsmith with so much cordiality as to leave behind part of the red ochre with which he was plentifully bedaubed, upon his face, and being seen in this state, was teased by the wags of his acquaintance with using *rouge*.

The philosophical use made of this interview exhibits the readiness with which a trifling incident is turned to the purpose of illustrating one of the leading passions of human nature, whether civilised or savage, the desire for dress and ornament. "I remember," he says, "when the Cherokee kings were over here, that I have waited for three hours during the time they were dressing. They never would venture to make their appearance till they had gone through the tedious ceremonies of the toilet: they had their boxes of oil and ochre, their fat and their perfumes, like the most effeminate beau, and generally took up four hours in dressing before they considered themselves as fit to be seen. We must not therefore consider delicacy in point of dress as a mark of refinement, since savages are much more difficult in this particular, than the most fashionable or tawdry European. The more barbarous the people, the fonder of finery."*

One of the scenes whither he was led, for occasional amusement more perhaps than it was voluntarily sought, was the well known debating society of the Robin Hood, held at a house of that name in Butcher Row, whither it had been removed from the Essex Head in Essex Street in the Strand, about 1747. The payment of sixpence formed the only requisite for admission, three halfpence of which were said to be put apart for purposes of charity. Monday evening was the period of meeting: the annual number of visitors

* Animated Nature, vol. ii. p. 97. 8vo. Lond. 1774.

averaged about 5000: a gilt chair indicated the presiding authority; and all questions, not excepting religion and politics, were open to discussion on being previously entered in a book kept for that purpose. Such a privilege on topics on which men never have and probably never will agree as may be supposed in such miscellaneous assemblages, was abused. On religious matters particularly blasphemous notions were frequently broached, which however open to refutation; and they were refuted and have always been refuted as often as advanced, produced injury to the minds of the class of persons, frequently illiterate or half-informed, who formed the majority of the auditors. In poisons of the mind as in those of the body, the antidote cannot wholly eradicate the evil; and the wise will not willingly expose themselves to the one in order to test the efficacy of the other. At length these discussions were pronounced by many persons a public nuisance; and several of the clergy, among whom was the eminent Mr. Romaine, thought proper to stigmatize them in their addresses from the pulpit.

The president, who is said to have checked this spirit when in his power, was a Mr. Caleb Jeacocke, who united the trades of baker and accomptant; and being possessed of considerable native acuteness and vigour of mind, a smattering of knowledge on popular topics, and fair character, promised by the early tenure and long possession of authority, and his superiority over others in his own station in life, to become perpetual dictator. He was fond of the office, though gratuitous; had sufficient energy of character to keep his motley audience sometimes in order; and frequently quitting the character of moderator, joined in the discussion in order to prove his claim to power. Here young men attached to the liberal professions, incipient debaters, and others, resorted as to a place of intellectual exercise; sometimes to listen to, sometimes to answer, the "eloquent baker." It was on one of these occasions that Goldsmith after hearing him give utterance to a train of strong and ingenious reasoning, involuntarily exclaimed, "That man was meant by nature for a lord chancellor." A witticism now stale from frequent repetition, is said to have originated on this occasion. The remark was addressed to Derrick; who after a moment's pause, replied in allusion to his occupation, "No, no, not so high; he was only intended for *master of the rolls*." He became, however, after laying down his hammer as president of the Robin Hood Society, a magistrate and as is said a useful one, for the county of Middlesex.

It appears, if we are to believe an account of this debating assemblage published soon afterward, that Goldsmith occasionally took part in the discussions; on what subjects does not appear: but from a degree of diffidence which rendered him easily liable to be disconcerted, we may believe the occasions were not numerous. Among notices of the frequenters of the meeting we find the following favourable sketch of him:—

("Mr. G * * d * * * th.)

"A man of learning and judgment: author of 'An Inquiry into

the modern State of Literature in Europe,' and many other ingenious works; a good orator and a candid disputant, with a clear head and an honest heart. He comes but seldom to the society."*

One of the strange characters among whom he was thrown here and in other places, in consequence of professing attachment to letters though now enjoying a different and unenviable notoriety, was Mr. Peter Annet. He had been brought up to the profession of medicine, one which to a wise and reflecting man offers peculiar opportunities of viewing in the structure of his species abundant evidence of the power and glory of his Creator; but which by the shallow and presumptuous is sometimes made a source of doubt; because as they find matter only under the dissecting knife, and not spirit, they are tempted to conclude its existence questionable, or in other words countenance materialism; a class of philosophers to whom the description of Burke in speaking of narrow-minded politicians so strongly applies; men who understand and value nothing "but what they can measure with a two foot rule, what they can tell upon ten fingers." Annet was of this order; and pushing his doctrine to its natural results, not only professed disbelief of Christianity, but exhibited the zeal of a fanatic in propagating his tenets. He had but few pretensions to literature and wrote nothing which deserves to be remembered. The press, however, being made the medium of assailing the religion of his country, the law interposed; and being convicted of blasphemy, he was sentenced to imprisonment and the pillory,—the latter being twice carried into execution toward the end of December 1762.

While in prison, where Archbishop Secker relieved the wants of the man while he remonstrated against the tenets of the unbeliever, he employed himself in writing a small work on Grammar. When finished, Goldsmith was requested to recommend it to Newbery, which was readily done, being unobjectionable in its nature; and to conclude the bargain in person, he carried the bookseller to the King's Bench prison. A sum was offered something more than had been expected by the author, who out of gratitude immediately volunteered a dedication, and as a further recommendation of the work in his own opinion, decided to put his name for it. Newbery, for obvious reasons, hesitated to accept this offer; the author strongly reiterated his fancied generosity; when at length it became necessary to hint, that the name of a gentleman subjected to the pillory for insults to the religion of his country placed in the titlepage of a book chiefly intended for youth, would effectually mar its circulation. The remark roused his pride; in vain the force of the objection was delicately urged; he became angry, and swore that no bookseller who was ashamed of his name should have a book of his to publish. The reply of the latter was, that he had some reputation to lose, if Mr. Annet had none; and wishing him good morning, left the self-willed author to find another purchaser.

Lloyd, the poet, who adds another to the list of those known as

* History of the Robin Hood Society. 18mo. Lond. 1764.

much for their irregularities as their genius, was likewise among his acquaintance: it is said to have commenced in an unusual manner,—whether previous to the criticism on Nash's life is doubtful; but the term "good-natured editor" used in it implied sufficient knowledge of his person or character. The story was told by Mr. Cooke, and warrants the propriety of the appellation used by Lloyd as to his easiness of temper.

While sitting in the Chapter Coffee-house, Goldsmith who had been recently ill, was accosted by a stranger with inquiries after his health; and evincing the surprise and hesitation natural on the occasion, the inquirer proceeded to introduce himself. "You will pardon my abruptness; my name is Lloyd; you are Dr. Goldsmith: as literary men, familiar to each other by name, we ought to be acquainted; and as I have a few friends to supper here this evening, let me have the pleasure of your company likewise without further ceremony." The frankness of the invitation to a man of social propensities, insured its acceptance: he joined the party composed chiefly of authors, spent an agreeable evening, but when about to depart overheard a discussion between his new friend and the landlord who seemed perfectly known to each other, implying that the one could not at that moment pay the reckoning while the other declined to give credit. The generosity of Goldsmith obviated the difficulty by guarantying the debt which eventually he paid, Lloyd who had long lived by shifts and expedients caring nothing further about the matter.

Another deception alleged to have been practised upon him is of a date shortly anterior to this: it is told by Sir John Hawkins, who viewed the Poet as he did Burke with no favourable eye, and even if true, indicates rather simplicity of character, a good-natured acquiescence in what he did not stop to examine, or a degree of delicacy in charging ignorance or imposture upon the supposed musician, than total ignorance of the matter in discussion. We may at least question the correctness of the story in the way he tells it. That Goldsmith had some though possibly slight knowledge of music is certain. Few persons of any education blow the flute for a series of years without knowing a single note; and it would only require an acquaintance with the first half dozen in the stave, to perceive the imposition attempted by his facetious acquaintance. Another reason for doubt applies to time. Roubiliac died after an illness of some duration, early in January 1762; the occurrence therefore must have taken place if at all some months previously. when Goldsmith was perhaps scarcely of consequence enough to be made the subject of ridicule, or to have it remembered of him nearly thirty years afterwards, when the alleged author of the trick had so long quitted the scene.

"But in truth," writes Sir John, in allusion to the performance of the Poet on the German flute, "he understood not the character in which music is written, and played on that instrument, as many of the vulgar do, merely by ear. Roubiliac, the sculptor, a merry fellow, once heard him play, and minding to put a trick upon him,

pretended to be charmed with his performance, as also that himself was skilled in the art, and entreated him to repeat the air, that he might write it down. Goldsmith readily consenting, Roubiliac called for paper, and scored thereon a few five-line staves, which having done, Goldsmith proceeded to play, and Roubiliac to write; but his writing was only such random notes on the lines and spaces as any one might set down who had ever inspected a page of music. When they had both done, Roubiliac showed the paper to Goldsmith, who, looking it over with seeming great attention, said it was very correct, and that if he had not seen him do it, he never could have believed his friend capable of writing music after him."

CHAPTER XII.

Boswell.—Residence of Goldsmith at Islington, and Connexion with Newbery.

ABOUT this period he first became acquainted with Mr. Boswell; an observer whose representations having had some influence in giving an erroneous idea of the character of the subject of these pages, their intercourse requires to be noticed more in detail.

He had just arrived from Scotland, warm with the design of seeking the society of the first wits of the metropolis; and had already, as he tells us, found access to Wilkes, Churchill, Thornton, Lloyd, and others. His chief object of pursuit, however, was Dr. Johnson. Before this introduction could be successfully accomplished, he met Goldsmith, one of their earliest interviews being at dinner with Mr. Thomas Davies, the bookseller, in Russell Street, Covent Garden, toward the end of 1762 or commencement of the following year. Mr. Robert Dodsley was of the party; and a discussion arising relative to the character of modern poetry, Goldsmith asserted that there was none, that is none of superior merit, of that age. Dodsley appealed to his *Collection* (the well known work in six volumes) for proofs to the contrary, maintaining, in his phrase, that though no palaces could be pointed out, such as Dryden's *Ode on St. Cecilia's Day*, there were villages composed of very pretty houses, and instanced particularly the poem of "The Spleen." Johnson on hearing of the argument gave it against Dodsley. "He and Goldsmith said the same thing," was his remark, "only he said it in a softer manner than Goldsmith did; for he acknowledged there was no poetry, nothing that towered above the common mark."

Whether Boswell took part in the conversation does not appear, but from his love of talking, his youthful presumption, his desire on all occasions to exhibit such knowledge as he possessed, and the popular nature of the topic, we may readily believe he was not silent; and boasting as he did of the acquaintance of Churchill and

his friends, he may have been induced to retail their opinions on such subjects, and uphold their claims to superiority. To this school of poetry, which had satire chiefly for its object, Goldsmith felt and expressed strong repugnance: he neither practised nor approved it; and if he were tempted to show how defective the taste or erroneous the judgment of its admirers, would probably have used little ceremony toward a presumptuous young man, such as his new Scottish acquaintance would appear, possessed of no known pretensions to learning, genius, knowledge, literature, or experience in life. He could not be supposed to discover in such a person, one who was destined eventually to sit in judgment upon his character, and become with a few persons not remarkable for critical taste, in some measure an arbiter of his fame. He would not have believed, even when Boswell became more known, that his opinions of literary merit could have weight with tolerable judges, even if his personal civilities were insincere; or that the biography of his friend Johnson (if he ever positively knew who was to be biographer) should be rendered the medium of what resembles a species of covert hostility towards himself.

Boswell, from the first, seems to have viewed him with no favourable eye; a tone of slight, meant to undervalue his powers, mingled indeed with a few sentences of regard, or a compliment to his generous and social qualities, runs through his work, and has often drawn animadversion from the higher order of literary men who have all expressed their sense of its injustice. Conjectures have been hazarded as to the cause, but the motives probably were various; springing from a thousand trifling sources, none singly of material importance, though together sufficient to create distaste in an intercourse which seems never to have reached the point of absolute friendship.

Jealousy of the regard of Johnson formed no doubt one of the chief reasons; a feeling which had not ceased to operate when there was no longer cause for apprehension. Viewing the great moralist as a kind of property which others would descend to the same obsequiousness as himself to secure, Boswell scarcely believed there was a class of men who, from higher spirit or the higher place they held in public esteem, shrunk from submissions that no private man, however eminent or estimable, had a right to exact, but which it suited his views or disposition to render. Wanting a strong tone of independence of mind himself, he made little allowance for its existence in others. He fancied, therefore, a dangerous rival in Goldsmith: a man of various genius, who stood high in esteem with the object of their common solicitude, who was much in his society, and who having no domestic ties requiring his presence, might be supposed to pay him a less divided attention. On the other hand, Goldsmith thought, and there is no doubt expressed to several common friends, that Johnson gave too much of his time to Boswell who he considered had no claim to it, either by high conversational powers, or the possession of acknowledged literary talents.

The querulous feeling of the biographer breaks out without concealment in the following amusing instance, and it marks likewise his presumption; for having at this time a very slight acquaintance with Dr. Johnson, he had no claim for admission to his moments of privacy, or just cause to envy another who from previous intimacy enjoyed this mark of favour. They had been supping together (July 1st, 1763,) at the Mitre, when Johnson, who often thus inverted the usual order of repasts, quitted the tavern to drink tea with Miss Williams, his blind pensioner, without inviting Boswell to join the party. "Dr. Goldsmith," says the latter, "being a privileged man, went with him this night, strutting away and calling to me with an air of superiority like that of an esoteric over that of an exoteric disciple of a sage of antiquity, 'I go to Miss Williams.' I confess I then envied him this mighty privilege, of which he seemed so proud; but it was not long before I obtained the same mark of distinction."

The period at which they met, and the relative situation of the parties, may have had weight in abating the admiration of Boswell for his Irish acquaintance. Young at the time, well born, with a high opinion of himself, and with a competent inheritance, he found the latter on their first meeting merely an author, possessing no distinguishing superiority, or who at least had not reached the point of celebrity which he felt bound to worship; he saw him, indeed, emerge speedily into notice, ascend every year higher in estimation, and at length attain the first reputation; but the merit which he had failed at first to discover he appeared scarcely ever after freely to admit.

There are persons willing to render homage to such as are already at the summit of fame, who cannot extend the same degree of applause to those who acquire it under their eye, and whose progress they have had the means of tracing step by step. We frequently see men who rise from obscurity to eminence little thought of by those who started in life as their equals; the privations, trials, and difficulties of the ascent, far from enhancing their merit in the eyes of such, seem to diminish it, or if admitted, it is with sundry deductions and qualifications. We seem to like to have our admiration taken by surprise. A meridian sun overpowers many with its splendour, who perceive little in the subdued beauty of its rise.

The mind of Boswell, obviously not of the most delicate or disinterested texture, influenced his conduct and opinions. In spirit he was, and aimed to be, a man of the world. In Goldsmith he saw qualities of an opposite kind, a thoughtlessness in discourse not uncommon with men of original powers,* an occasional effusion of

* Mr. D'Israeli has happily touched on this frequent characteristic of the race of which he treats:—

"One peculiar trait in the conversations of men of genius which has often injured them when the listeners were not intimately acquainted with the man, are certain sports of a vacant mind; a sudden impulse to throw out opinions and take views of things in some humour of the moment. Extravagant paradoxes and false opinions are caught up by the humbler proser; and the Philistines are thus enabled to triumph over the strong and gifted man, because in the hour of confidence, and in the abandonment of the mind, he laid his head in their lap, and

vanity, oddities of conduct or address, and a simplicity of character, which as varying from the conventional standard, he thought denoted a degree of inferiority. On no better foundation than this, men hackneyed in the ways of life often assume superiority over the recluse scholar, with whom in genius or acquirements they admit of no comparison. Peculiarities floating upon the surface of character they keenly see; qualities which command sincere admiration may lie beneath, but they have neither taste for the search, nor disposition to value them when found. There is no severer, or more unfit, judge of a man of genius than what is called a man of the world.

Another cause of distaste toward Goldsmith is conjectured to have been envy of his literary success. As this usually implies a degree of rivalry in the same pursuit, it is difficult to conceive how Boswell could so far mistake his own powers; but the notice of Johnson, a general acquaintance with men who had acquired eminence by the cultivation of letters, the success of his volume on Corsica, impressed the belief as the tone of his writings prove, that he was fitted if he thought proper, to take a respectable station in literature. Traces of discontent at the popularity of the author of the Traveller appear in various parts of his book,—as on his return from the Continent, when surprise is expressed at finding him stand so high; but the disposition to find fault would seem to have preceded even this period. On the third or fourth interview only (June 25th, 1763,) with Dr. Johnson, a conversation occurred respecting Goldsmith, in which the former states his opinion, even then, of the promising literary character of his friend, and glances not less forcibly at his foibles. We are not told what led to the observations; but from the context it is difficult not to believe they were made in reply to comments of an unfavourable kind proceeding from Boswell:—"Dr. Goldsmith," said the moralist, "is one of the first men we now have as an author, and he is a very worthy man too. He has been loose in his principles, but he is coming right."

In the tour to the Hebrides many years afterwards, an anecdote transpires, which seems as if he had been brooding over the fame of Goldsmith in no friendly mood, deeming it lightly acquired, or not wholly deserved. After parting with some military officers, and remarking how little of fame or money the majority acquired by service, he introduces the Poet's name in the following manner, though unconnected with the persons or subject before them:—"BOSWELL. Goldsmith has acquired more fame than all the officers last war who were not generals. JOHNSON. Why, Sir, you will find ten thousand fit to do what they did, before you find one who does what Goldsmith has done. You must consider that a thing is valued according to its rarity. A pebble that paves the street is in itself more useful than the diamond upon a lady's finger.

taught them how he might be shorn of his strength."—*The Literary Character illustrated*, pp. 120, 121. 8vo. 1818.

Apprehension of superseding him in the office of biographer formed at one period no doubt a cause of jealousy: for having early appropriated this character to himself, all who dared to intrude upon it were viewed with distrust and aversion. He never forgave, as his pages evince, the partial intrusion upon what he deemed his province, by Sir John Hawkins and Mrs. Piozzi. When the latter, as Mrs. Thrale, inquired of Johnson who was likely to be his biographer, and suggested Goldsmith, the reply was that he no doubt would do it best. Such an intimation conveyed to Boswell was sufficient to sour his constitutional good humour; for he doubtless heard of what, among the friends of Johnson, was likely to form an occasional subject of discussion.

To these causes of dissatisfaction may be added the probable knowledge that Goldsmith thought lightly of certain points in his character as well as of his literary pretensions. Mr. Wilkes shortly after the publication of the biography of Dr. Johnson, told several anecdotes of the latter during a convivial evening spent in the house of an alderman in the city, in the course of which Boswell's name frequently occurred. Some one sitting near, and thinking probably to gratify the distaste of the once fiery patriot to the natives of Scotland, observed that the biographer had shown himself by his own account "a sneaking Scotchman." "I do not think so badly of Boswell," replied Wilkes: "he can be an honest fellow. Goldsmith's description of him was the best. Some one under momentary irritation, I forget now on what occasion, called him a 'Scotch cur.' 'No, no,' replied Goldsmith playing upon the word, 'you are too severe; he is merely a Scotch *bur*.* Tom Davies threw him at Johnson in sport, and he has the faculty of *sticking*.'"†

Wilkes likewise said on this and on other occasions, that he had heard Goldsmith treat Boswell's opinions on literary matters in conversation very cavalierly, and frequently overrule them. The same remark was made by the late Mr. English, who is believed to have had it from Burke with whom he was in frequent communication; on one occasion particularly, in discussing a question connected with old English ballad poetry, Goldsmith told him "he knew nothing about it." It will hereafter be seen that he ridiculed some of his verses written for the Edinburgh theatre.

Some degree of offence may have been given by jests upon Scotland. Goldsmith during his sojourn there had not been placed in the best situation for observing the manners of the people; but such peculiarities as he saw, and which he dashed probably like most wits with a portion of caricature in description, furnished matter for several ludicrous stories told not without humour. Boswell, however forced on such occasions to listen to the sarcasms of Johnson, felt indisposed to submit to the wit of Goldsmith; and in his volumes

* The prickly head of the burdock.

† Related by the late Mr. Wheble, well known in the city of London by his connexion with the press and struggle with the House of Commons during the mayoralty of Wilkes.

alludes to these attacks in a spirit akin to ill-humour not usual with him.

When we examine the passages in the Life of Johnson, where the biographer noticing the Irish poet gives us his opinion of him, little difficulty will be found in furnishing an answer where specific censure is advanced.

"No man," says Boswell, "had the art of displaying with more advantage as a writer whatever literary acquisitions he made. '*Nihil quod tetigit non ornavit.*' His mind resembled a fertile but thin soil. There was a quick but not a strong vegetation of whatever chanced to be thrown upon it. No deep root could be struck. The oak of the forest did not grow there; but the elegant shrubbery and the fragrant parterre appeared in gay succession."

Vague and metaphorical depreciation such as this, whether his own or borrowed, as is supposed, from the phraseology of Johnson, means any thing or nothing at the pleasure of the writer; it imparts no definite idea of him whom it attempts to describe; conveys no estimate of the character of his productions, of his excellencies or defects; of the nature, variety, or use made of his intellectual powers: omit the name of Goldsmith, and similar terms may apply with as much propriety to most of our poets. If it be meant that he was not so profound a thinker as Bacon or Locke, we shall be compelled to admit the same of Dryden, Pope, Addison, Gray, Collins, and many more of the same order; of most of our dramatists, all our novelists, and in short, of the writers of all works of imagination. Of them and of him we can alone judge by what they attempted. If want of moral depth, or deficient acquaintance with human nature be laid to his charge, every reader may rebut the charge in a moment by turning to almost any page of his works, and pointing out passages and thoughts exhibiting acute, various, and profound observation. Without such powers, in addition to others, he could scarcely have gained popularity, and assuredly never would have retained it. No product of a "thin soil" can take deep root, as his productions have done, in the affectionate admiration of his countrymen.

The *mind* of an author cannot by any metaphysical refinement be disconnected from the *labours* of his mind. To say therefore that the latter wants strength as is implied by the terms used, when its *labours* display richness, variety, beauty, and promise as great durability as any similar things of the century, is a contradiction in terms. No ordinary or superficial mind can originate works of fine or strong imagination. Before it can be attempted to underrate Goldsmith, the power and beauty of poetry, of narrative fiction, and of dramatic writing, must be lowered in public opinion. By these standards he is to be tried; by these fruits we judge of the tree; or in other words by the *works* of an author we must judge of his *mind*. In reply, therefore, to a tone of general disparagement regarding "fertile but thin soils," we need only inquire how he stands in the opinion of the great body of the people for whom he wrote; and here unanimous approval at once furnishes the answer. We may again ask, Was

his sphere of exertion narrow? This can scarcely be said of one who embraced poetry, the drama, fictitious narrative, history, and other subjects. If it be again demanded, How on all these topics has he acquitted himself? Dr. Johnson gives the reply:—"A man," he says, "of such variety of powers, and of such felicity of performance, that he always seemed to do best that which he was doing." To attempt so many departments of literature, and to succeed in no ordinary degree in all, is a merit of which no error or personal prejudice of a critic such as Boswell can deprive him; and which might silence criticism altogether were it not doubtful, from the first clause in the preceding passage, whether this variety and facility in mastering a subject, were not considered by the writer of it not far removed from a fault.

"He was," continues Boswell in the same spirit, "very much what the French call *un étourdi*; and from vanity, and an eager desire of being conspicuous wherever he was, he frequently talked carelessly, without knowledge of the subject, or even without thought."

What is here attributed to vanity and the desire of being noticed, Sir Joshua Reynolds explained from the repeated declarations of the Poet himself, who dwelt warmly on the pleasure of being liked in society, and observed how hard it was that literary reputation should preclude an author, as he had frequently remarked it did in consequence of the envy shown towards such a character, from the social regard enjoyed by other men. From this cause the Painter was convinced that the Poet often intentionally lowered his standard of thought in familiar conversation, trusting to his character being sufficiently supported by his works. Boswell questions the truth of this theory. Between these opinions it will not be difficult which to prefer; the former saw him only by snatches during his visits to London which were short and necessarily occupied with other matters; while Reynolds, in his own house as a frequent visiter, as well as in company with common friends, kept up constant intercourse for a series of years, and enjoyed more of his confidence and esteem than any other person whatever.

In a long and interesting conversation of the writer of these pages with the late Mr. Northcote a few weeks before his death, he expressed himself of the same opinion as Sir Joshua, regarding Goldsmith's assumed playfulness of manners. In illustration of the ease and familiarity he soon produced even among strangers, one of his remarks on this subject, characteristic of his emphatic phraseology, may be given. "When Goldsmith entered a room, Sir, people who did not know him became for a moment silent from awe of his literary reputation; when he came out again they were riding upon his back."

The remark of the Poet upon the jealousy frequently evinced towards men of eminent literary merit seems based upon close observation of human life, and may be considered the usual tax paid by every species of superiority. Persons who enjoy this distinction must expect to have their demeanour narrowly observed, their pretensions questioned, and every deduction made from the amount of

desert that a searching scrutiny can discover; and this disposition will be too often found, as the charge of Goldsmith in part implied, in their superiors in rank and station. If an example of the truth of this theory were wanting, it was at hand. He saw Dr. Johnson, either from determination not to descend from the customary pre-eminence awarded to him by men of talent, or inability to assume those lighter graces which make their way in gay and fashionable society, practically excluded from extensive intercourse among the higher circles of life: the philosopher was not disinclined to be received among the titled and the wealthy; but no serious attempt was made to invite him thither, greatly to the discredit of the policy that neglected so warm an admirer and so powerful an advocate. The pride of talents and the pride of rank were probably thought to be too nearly upon an equality for the latter not to lose something of dignity by frequent social collision; all his friends and companions were therefore found among the middling class. He saw indeed and admitted the fact, of Goldsmith whose constitutional temperament was more light and playful than his own, being liked in general society, but attributed it to the idea of those who entertained him believing that on all common matters they were his superiors.

"Those," continues Boswell, "who were in any way distinguished excited envy in him to so ridiculous an excess, that the instances of it are hardly credible. When accompanying two beautiful young ladies with their mother on a tour in France, he was seriously angry that more attention was paid to them than to him; and at the exhibition of the *Funtoccini* in London, when those who sat next him observed with what dexterity a puppet was made to toss a pike, he could not bear that it should have such praise, and exclaimed, with some warmth, 'Pshaw! I can do it better myself.'"

Whatever jealousy Goldsmith may have at any time exhibited, the instances here adduced are both, as will be hereafter seen, *untrue*: they are contradicted by parties who were present; and the former by an authority about which there can be no mistake, namely, by the lady chiefly concerned who has stated it in person to the present writer. Boswell not disinclined to listen to misrepresentations of one who did not stand high in his favour, gave credence to stories which being copied by every subsequent memoir-writer, have obtained a currency their improbability did not deserve. They were first, it appears, propounded as jests, a species of wit to which the Poet was frequently subjected, and assumed by repetition and the usual exaggeration attending it something like the semblance of truth. Such anecdotes, told at first with the view of creating a laugh, become the means of permanent injury, where none feel particularly interested in examining into their correctness, and may long remain from this cause, as in the present instance, uncontradicted.

Were the judgment of Boswell merely in fault in the remarks he makes or the stories he records of an old acquaintance, that Dr. Johnson, so frequently and forcibly expressed, and to which he deferred on most other occasions, was always before him to correct an

erroneous impression. In vain was it repeatedly said by the latter, that "Goldsmith was a very great man;" or that "Goldsmith was a man who whatever he wrote did it better than any other man could do. He deserved a place in Westminster Abbey; and every year he lived would have deserved it better." Or again, "Take him as a poet, his Traveller is a very fine performance; ay, and so is his Deserted Village, were it not sometimes too much the echo of his Traveller. Whether, indeed, we take him as a poet,—as a comic writer,—or as an historian,—he stands in the first class."

These and similar commendations which the biographer repeats without venturing to question their justice, pass from his pen in silence; he never joins in the praise, excepting by making an occasional admission that "his affections were social and generous, and when he had money he gave it liberally." He likewise confesses that though the Irish poet was prone to talk carelessly and without sufficient knowledge of the subject, his reputed absurdities in conversation were exaggerated; an impression that will occur to every reader of works in which his name or conversation is mentioned, where so far from finding absurdity, all the specimens given us display a ready wit, pertinent observation, or such remarks as allowably fall from any one in the unreserved intercourse of private life.

When the publication of Johnson's Life set the surviving friends and admirers of Goldsmith on their defence, Lord Charlemont, always moderate in his sentiments, expressed his wonder how Boswell could make the mistake of undervaluing a writer of such unquestionable genius and popularity. Burke, in conversation with the beautiful Mrs. (afterwards Lady) Crewe, concluded some pointed animadversions with the remark, "What rational opinion, my dear madam, could you expect a lawyer to give of a poet?" Wilkes, who may have heard of this, improved upon it with his usual vivacity on the occasion of the city dinner mentioned in a preceding page:—"A Scotch lawyer and an Irish poet I hold to be about as opposite as the antipodes: if they agreed in any thing, I should marvel much, and least of all in forming a favourable opinion of each other." Sir Joshua Reynolds expressed dissent from Boswell's opinions even before the work appeared in print, plainly intimating to him in conversation that he ought to take a more favourable view of the character of their departed acquaintance than by what fell from him in private it was obvious he intended. George Steevens, on the same subject, once observed, in his usual sarcastic spirit, "Why, Sir, it is not unusual for a man who has much genius to be censured by one who has none." Bishop Percy frequently in private, complained of the injustice done to his former friend. Malone, who had afterwards to edit the work in which it appeared, felt and expressed the same opinion strongly, and thus communicates it in a letter to that prelate now before the writer, dated Queen Ann Street, September 25th, 1807. The interpolations to which allusion is made were introduced into the memoir of Goldsmith by, as it was said, the editor employed by the publishers after they had quarrelled with the Bishop.

"I can myself, from personal knowledge, bear witness to the

truth of your character of him (Goldsmith,) for I never observed any of those grimaces or fooleries that the interpolator talks of; nor could I ever assent to Lord Orford's pointed sentence, that he was 'an inspired idiot,' which was said and circulated merely for the sake of the point, without any regard to just representation. I always made battle against Boswell's representation of him also in the *Life of Johnson*; and often expressed to him my opinion that he rated Goldsmith much too low."*

Every writer of eminence in adverting to the subject has arrived at a similar conclusion. "I wonder," says Sir Walter Scott, "why Boswell so often displays a malevolent feeling towards Goldsmith. Rivalry for Johnson's good graces, perhaps?"† Mr. Croker and others who have examined the subject seem to agree in this inference; and in the conversation of literary circles the same language is universally held. A distinguished political and literary character thus expresses himself in a letter to the writer:—"Boswell, I think, treats poor Goldy hardly. He was, perhaps like some others of us Irish, occasionally in the habit of talking idly, but he had brilliant talents and a good heart; a better one, I take it, than Johnson's."

The character of Boswell himself, as furnishing some clew to his conduct and sentiments, cannot be passed without notice. If Johnson has been called to account for his prejudices against one popular poet (Gray,) his biographer is as open to remark for unfair comments upon another.

We find it tinged with peculiarities which have been a source of alternate conjecture and surprise to all who have written about, and nearly all who have read him; for he stands in the very unusual predicament of having given birth to one of the most amusing and in some respects instructive books in our language, without winning from the reader corresponding respect for its author. While the former, therefore, is sought and perused with eager curiosity and satisfaction, invective and ridicule, terms the most contemptuous and bitter have been applied to his personal conduct and qualities.‡ Literary men more particularly have been severe in their judgments, as if the want of spirit and independence of mind shown by one who claimed to be enrolled in their order, had in his intercourse with the great moralist in some measure compromised its honour. Other classes of readers, who fix their attention upon the book and care nothing for the character of the writer, deem this asperity excessive or undeserved, and not unnaturally perhaps, give their sympathy and regard to one who, whatever his defects, has contributed so much to their entertainment.

It may be true that he was not a high-minded man, but this did not necessarily unfit him for the office he undertook. Possessed of considerable talent, industry, and observation, he yet conveys no impression of enjoying an enlarged or rigorous understanding. Fre-

* MS. correspondence in possession of Mr. Mason.

† Mr. Croker's edition of Boswell.

‡ *Edinburgh Review*.—Notice of the last edition of Boswell.

quently vain and credulous, inquisitive and communicative, bustling and occasionally assuming, he seems to have been one of those persons seen in the mixed societies of a great metropolis who are sometimes amusing by their gossip, and sometimes annoying by their intrusion; who are endured more than sought; who without pretension to notice from their own merits, make it a pursuit to know and to talk to all who are so, and from the familiarity thus assumed or granted, at length seem to believe that they have reflected back upon them part of the distinction belonging to their eminent acquaintance. His peculiarities are often contradictory: we are in doubt whether sense or folly, simplicity or cunning, a degree of pride sometimes amusing, or a spirit of adulation almost servile, predominate in the picture he has left of himself. If we find in him occasional selfishness, there is likewise a devotion towards the great man whom he worshipped approaching to generosity; a determination never thought derogatory to submit to humiliating rebuffs and caustic reprehensions with a patience more than philosophical. Mingled with this there was much real kindness in trying to cheer the solitary hours of his friend who sought society from the relief thence afforded to a mind often affected by morbid melancholy, and who had no domestic companion to bestow it: he further felt probably, that this kind feeling formed his chief claim to attention from the philosopher; and that having intruded upon him at first with no slight degree of intrepidity as being young, unknown, and without claim to such an honour, and continued it by perseverance, submission could alone enable him to retain hold upon his affection. He was proud, and not unreasonably so, of being known as an attached friend of the first literary man of the age; but jealous to excess of others who enjoyed an honour which he seemed to think ought to be exclusively his own.

A passion for notoriety, or mistaken idea of his consequence when no grounds existed on which to expect it, was soon obvious in his character. Thus so early, as 1766 and a few succeeding years, his arrivals in London and occasional movements in its vicinity, are announced in newspaper paragraphs, originating no doubt with himself. To this passion may be owing in part the first effort to seek out Johnson; to this likewise his officious attendance upon, or patronage as it was called, of General Paoli, which he or his friends took care to announce frequently in the daily journals*; while as a

* The following are selected from among others :—

"When Mr. Boswell was presented to the General de Paoli he paid this compliment to the Corsicans :—'Sir, I am upon my travels, and have lately visited Rome: I am come from seeing the ruins of one brave and free people, to see the rise of another.'—*Lloyd's Evening Post*, Jan. 10—13. 1766.

"James Boswell, Esq. is expected in town."—*Public Advertiser*, Feb. 28, 1768.

"Yesterday James Boswell, Esq. arrived from Scotland at his lodgings in Half-Moon Street, Piccadilly."—*Ibid.* March 24, 1768.

In December he advertised a memorial, in order to raise a subscription for the Corsicans.

"By Special permission of his excellency Paoli, Boswells's account of Corsica. 2d. edition."—*Public Advertiser*, Jan. 1769.

sort of appendage to the train of the Corsican patriot, he secured an introduction to such persons of rank and talent as sought out the former in consequence of being a novel object of attraction. To the ridicule incurred in society by these little attentances and assumptions of public importance he was nearly insensible. Gratified with attention himself, he thought it allowable to administer to the vanity of others; and seemed not to know that a certain degree of moral dignity was lost by the open flattery of any man however great his talents or station. Yet his worldly speculations, though aided by this engine, and that he meant it as a mode of advancement there is no doubt, failed; he did not succeed at the English bar: Fox and Burke, whom he praised, and probably loved, had nothing to give; and Mr. Pitt, in whose praise he composed and sung a fulsome ballad at a city dinner in his presence, was not to be won by such means; nothing was rendered by the minister in return for his admiration or adulation, and the neglect pained and irritated him.

The same love of being known made him a talker, but with so little success, that Topham Beauclerk jocularly threatened Lord Charlemont then in Ireland, if he would not come to London, to send "Boswell to talk to him." Of his powers of mind, Johnson for the first ten years of their acquaintance appears to have entertained a poor opinion. Writing to Mrs. Thrale from Scotland on the conclusion of the tour in that country, he says, (November 3^d, 1773,) "*Boswell will praise my resolution and perseverance, and I shall in return celebrate his good humour and cheerfulness. He has better faculties than I had imagined; more justness of discernment, and more fecundity of images.*" No surprise need be entertained at his partiality for one of whose understanding he may have previously thought lightly; for it is not necessary to admire the intellect of all whom we nevertheless cordially love. The philosopher was flattered no doubt by the complimentary language of his companion, but more by his personal attachment, and the trouble taken on all occasions for his amusement. He was further pleased by the rather unusual occurrence of being courted for the sake of his wisdom and learning by one so much younger than himself, instead of being shunned as age and wisdom commonly are, by the youthful and

"Extract of a letter from Dublin, June 8 :—

"James Boswell, Esq. having now visited Ireland, he dined with his grace the Duke of Leinster at his country seat at Cartown. He also went by special invitation to visit the Lord Lieutenant at his country seat at Leixlip, to which he was conducted in one of his Excellency's coaches by Lieutenant Colonel Walsh. He dined there and staid all night, and next morning came in the coach with his Excellency to the Phoenix Park, and was present at a review of Sir Joseph York's dragoons. He also dined with the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor at the mayoralty. He is now set out on his return to Scotland."—*Ibid.* July 7.

Spoke verses at the jubilee in the character of a Corsican, Sept. 6., on which many jests were passed at the time.

"On Sunday last, General Paoli, accompanied by James Boswell, Esq., took an airing in Hyde Parke in his coach. His Excellency came out and took an airing by the Serpentine river, and through Kensington Gardens, with which he seemed very much pleased."—*Ibid.* Oct. 4.

giddy; and this he probably deemed a forcible tribute to his own merit on the one part, and an evidence of the good sense at least of his acquaintance on the other. He felt likewise what no doubt had its effect, that this regard and admiration proceeded from a person of education, of ancient family, of competent fortune, and respectably known in his native country, who whatever might be his talents, deserved praise for several good private qualities.

For these proofs of attachment and kindness to one who has so many claims on our regard as Johnson, if we cannot altogether respect Boswell, it is difficult to dislike him. He was good-humoured, free from malignity, and excepting where some jealousy or prejudice interfered, and for which he may have thought he had sufficient reason, seldom unjust to those of whom he had occasion to speak. His social propensities were well known, and a contemporary, Mr. Courtenay, thus laments his absence:—

“No Boswell joys o’er wine.”

Want of candour is rarely among his defects. On the contrary, he opens his mind so freely, that we discover much of what is passing there even possibly when such disclosure was not meant; for had he been conscious of the light in which we are often obliged to view him, it is difficult to believe he would not have shown more caution, although at the expense of a portion of the interest attached to his book. Some reserve however is necessary with all human creatures: it is seldom safe to unveil the whole mind, to make society the depository of *all* our thoughts; men cannot safely make this disclosure, and on the other hand we ought not on all occasions to listen to it, or at least to hear the confession with forbearance: the world is a thankless confidant, and a severe censor.

One of his accusations against Goldsmith is imitation of the dress and manner of Johnson, yet he was himself so notorious for this serious mimicry as to be the object of general remark. Gifford, in the *Mæviad*, more severely than the facts warrant, adverts to this peculiarity and to his general character:—

“And Boswell, aping with preposterous pride
Johnson’s worst frailties, rolls from side to side;
His heavy head from hour to hour erects;
Affects the fool, and is what he affects.”

A more minute description of his appearance has been given by a lady, whose early talents and celebrity made her a favourite with Johnson, and in consequence almost a source of jealousy to his biographer when they met in general society. “He had,” says Madame D’Ardlay, “an odd mock solemnity of tone and manner, that he had acquired imperceptibly from constantly thinking of and imitating Dr. Johnson, whose own solemnity, nevertheless far from mock, was the result of pensive rumination. There was also something slouching in the gait and dress of Mr. Boswell, that wore an air ridiculously enough of purporting to personify the same model. His clothes

were always too large for him; his hair or wig was constantly in a state of negligence; and he never for a moment sat still or upright on a chair. Every look and movement displayed either intentional or involuntary imitation.”*

The nature of his book has not escaped censure nearly as severe as that directed against the character of its author. Breach of hospitality, and violation of the implied laws of society which make it an offence to repeat conversations never meant or expected to extend beyond the circle in which they were uttered, have been urged against him, and harsh names in consequence applied, such as tale-bearer, eavesdropper, and others not less offensive.† All this is unjust. No harm is known to have accrued from what he reveals, though personal vanity may have been wounded, or folly occasionally exposed by the retorts being recorded which they provoked from the sarcastic spirit of Johnson. But it may be asked in return whether the miscellaneous society of a London dinner-table, discussing every topic that chance flings before the members, be one which is strictly private, or whether persons acquire the right to utter nonsense there more than at other places with impunity? To a man of known talents, the defeats or reproofs he may meet with on such occasions, tell little against him; and if others of inferior reputation venture to risk absurdities in sentiment or opinion, they should have fortitude enough to submit to the punishment. After all the storm of reproach vented against Boswell for alleged social treachery, who does not read the work with avidity, and has not gained from it instruction and delight? And who for a moment wishes, notwithstanding some erroneous and prejudiced views, that it had never appeared?

The indifferent figure which he permits himself to make in his own picture, though a source it is said of extreme mortification to the pride of his relatives, forms a guarantee of the general honesty of his

* *Memoirs of Dr. Burney*, vol. ii. p. 191.

† In preparing his work for the press, a laudable desire to give his authorities appears in the following extract of a letter to Bishop Percy, April 9, 1790, from the MS. collection of Mr. Mason. The Bishop, as in the instance of the edition of Goldsmith, hesitated to give his name or authority to any production not ecclesiastical, and did not in fact interest himself seriously on other subjects.

“As to suppressing your Lordship’s name, when relating the very few anecdotes of Johnson with which you have favoured me, I will do anything to oblige your Lordship but that very thing. I owe to the authenticity of my work, to its respectability, and to the credit of my illustrious friend, to introduce the names of as many eminent persons as I can. It is comparatively a very small portion which is sanctioned by that of your Lordship, and there is nothing even bordering on impropriety. Believe me, my Lord, you are not the only bishop in the number of great men with which my pages are graced. I am quite resolute as to this matter.

“Pray who is it that has the charge of Goldsmith’s works here? I should like to talk with him. I know not where the plan of his *Encyclopædia* is, or if it be preserved.

“Our amiable friend Sir Joshua Reynolds has received from the Empress of Russia the present of a very fine gold snuff-box, beautifully enamelled with her head on the lid, set round with five-and-thirty capital diamonds. Within it is a slip of paper on which are written in her own hand these words—I think I recollect them exactly:—‘*Pour le Chevalier Reynolds, en témoignage du contentement que j’ai ressenti de ses excellens Discours sur la Peinture.*’”

reports. Statements of numerous conversations, we are aware, cannot be always either accurate or full: the omission of an extenuating word or circumstance, or the introduction of a different term from that used at the moment, may impart a colouring to a discussion or story which the original circumstances did not warrant. In the dialogues with Johnson, some of the speakers probably have not had justice, or but imperfect justice, done them. Many omissions must necessarily have occurred under the circumstances in which the notes were taken; and he avows suppressions, the publication of which would have given offence, some of which it is believed bore as hardly upon himself as upon others. But on the whole, he may be considered as giving us the purport, if not words, as nearly as circumstances permitted, and therefore what he represents as coming under his own observation we may believe.

We are not required to place similar confidence in what he gleaned from others, or to allow much weight to his mere opinions. To Goldsmith he is, as we see, unjust; to Sir John Hawkins, though not an amiable man, and to Mrs. Piozzi he is almost hostile; to a few others likewise, less liberal than might be wished. Yet as his representations are sometimes quoted in estimating characters of the past age, we have an exemplification of what every one must have found in their experience of the world, the different degrees of deference paid to dead and to living testimony. Many a statesman who has declaimed in Parliament for years without carrying a motion, or almost winning a vote, is often quoted after death as an authority even by surviving opponents, on points of political faith and practice. So the notions of Boswell upon literary men and merit, which would have commanded little attention from his contemporaries, receive by being disseminated in a popular book, a degree of attention denied personally to the writer.*

London was now exchanged by Goldsmith for a country residence.

* The correspondence of Hannah More furnishes a few characteristic notices of Boswell. At a dinner at Bishop Shipley's in 1781, where were Johnson, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Gibbon, Langton, Lords Spencer and Althorp, one of his infirmities is alluded to, and in terms that render it almost doubtful whether the subject of his address to her on the occasion was not *amatory*.

"I was heartily disgusted with Mr. Boswell, who came up stairs after dinner much disordered with wine, and addressed me in a manner which drew from me a sharp rebuke, for which I fancy he will not easily forgive me."

It appears likewise that besides being a habitual imitator of the manner of Johnson sometimes perhaps unconsciously, he could play the amusing mimic by design. At a party at Mrs. Vesey's she writes—"Boswell brought to my mind the whole of a very mirthful conversation at dear Mrs. Garrick's, and my being made by Sir William Forbes the umpire in a trial of skill between Garrick and Boswell which could most nearly imitate Dr. Johnson's manner. I remember I gave it for Boswell in familiar conversation, and for Garrick in reciting poetry."

In 1785 she writes—the book alluded to being no doubt the *Tour to the Hebrides*:—"Boswell tells me he is printing *anecdotes* of Johnson; not his *life*, but as he has the vanity to call it, his *pyramid*. I besought his tenderness for our virtuous and most revered departed friend, and begged he would mitigate some of his asperities. He said roughly 'He would not cut off his claws, nor make a tiger a cat to please any one.' It will I doubt not, be a very amusing book; but I hope not an indiscreet one: he has great enthusiasm, and some fire."

		Brought forward	-	91	3	0
19.	To ditto	-	-	1	1	0
24.	To ditto	-	-	2	2	0
Oct. 8.	To ditto	-	-	2	2	0
10.	To cash paid your bill to Mrs. Fleming	-	-	14	13	6
				<hr/>		
	By copies of different kinds	-	-	£111	1	6
				<hr/>		
				- 63 0 0		
				<hr/>		
				£48 1 6		
				<hr/>		

Oct. 11. By note of hand sent and delivered up the vouchers."

The lady whose inmate he became, is supposed to be represented in a picture which appeared in the winter exhibition of the works of deceased British artists in 1832. It was named "Goldsmith's Hostess" in the catalogue, and represents an elderly lady in a satin dress, with a Bible open before her: the painter is said to be Hogarth; and the inference thence drawn is, that he was a familiar visiter of the Poet previous to his death in 1764. The history of the painting is unknown, excepting that it has been forty years in the family of the present proprietor,* has always been designated among its members by the title it now bears, and was purchased by his father out of, as is believed, the Hyde collection. An etching, supposed to be from the same picture, is said to have been published some years ago.

Here he continued a resident during the whole of 1763 and part of 1764; and as illustrative of his private habits, the following bill of his landlady for the items of expense during a quarter will gratify curiosity. By this he appears to have been fond of sassafras, a decoction of which was then in vogue as an innocent and wholesome beverage, though now chiefly confined to medical purposes. The dinners mentioned without any price affixed were given to visitors of her lodger, and seem introduced in order that the generosity of his hostess towards him and them should not be forgotten. One of these, Dr. Reman as he is called here, was a Dr. Wm. Redmond, an Irish physician, who having resided several years in France where he had been acquainted with the Poet, had come to try his success in England; and professing to have made discoveries in the properties, or what he chose to term the "principles of antimony," had become involved in a dispute with some members of the Society of Arts, on which a year or two afterward he published a pamphlet in French.† To the bill is appended the particulars of the account of his laundress, which it is scarcely necessary to transcribe: the items sufficiently prove that if formerly open to the

* Mr. R. Graves.

† "Imported by T. Becket and P. A. De Hondt, near Surrey Street, in the Strand. Price 1s. 6d. 'Essai sur les Principes de l'Antimoine, par le Dr. Remond; avec une suite de Lettres intéressantes relatives à sa dispute avec la Société des Arts et des Sciences de Londres.'"—*Public Advertiser*. Some other notices of him occur in the newspapers of the day.

charge of neglecting his linen, it could not now justly be brought against him.

		Doctor Goldsmith	Dr. to Eliz. Fleming.			
" 1763.						
Aug. 22.	A pint of mountain -	-	-	-	£0	1 0
	A gentleman's dinner -	-	-	-	0	0 0
24.	A bottle of port -	-	-	-	0	2 0
	4 gentlemen's teas -	-	-	-	0	1 6
25.	Dr. Reman's dinner and tea -	-	-	-	0	0 0
Sept. 5.	----- dinner -	-	-	-	0	0 0
7.	Sassafras -	-	-	-	0	0 6
11.	Dr. Reman's dinner -	-	-	-	0	0 0
29.	A bottle of port -	-	-	-	0	2 0
	Mr. Baggot, dinner -	-	-	-	0	0 0
Oct. 8.	Sassafras -	-	-	-	0	0 3
10.	Mr. Baggot, tea -	-	-	-	0	0 0
14.	Paper -	-	-	-	0	1 0
24.	Sassafras -	-	-	-	0	0 3
25.	Paid the newsman -	-	-	-	0	16 10½
30.	Wine and cakes -	-	-	-	0	1 6
31.	To the Rev. Mr. Tyrrell -	-	-	-	0	2 6
	Mr. Baggot, dinner -	-	-	-	0	0 0
	Sassafras -	-	-	-	0	0 6
Nov. 5.	Ditto -	-	-	-	0	0 6
	10 sheets of paper -	-	-	-	0	0 5
8.	Pens -	-	-	-	0	0 2½
	Paper -	-	-	-	0	1 0
	Sassafras -	-	-	-	0	0 6
	To 3 months' board -	-	-	-	12	10 0
	To shoes-cleaning -	-	-	-	0	2 6
	To Washing -	-	-	-	0	18 0½
					£15	3 0¾

Received, Dec. 9, 1763, by the hands of Mr. Newbery, the contents in full.

ELIZ. FLEMING."

About the period of his removal thither, he was solicited to join in the "Poetical Calendar," a publication undertaken by the Reverend Mr. Fawkes, translator of several of the Greek minor poets, and Vicar of Orpington, and Mr. Woty, both his acquaintance: the invitation was declined, as is said, from a poor opinion of the poetical powers of his colleagues. The first volume came out in February, 1763, and met with only tolerable success.

CHAPTER XIII.

Literary Projects.—Brooke's Natural History.—Martial Review.—Literary Club.—
Prefaces and Translations.—Letters from a Nobleman to his Son.

It was probably about this period he projected an edition of Pope's works, with a life and notes, containing such illustrative matter as time had made public since the death of that distinguished poet. With this view he addressed a letter, which was known to be in existence a few years afterwards, to Tonson the bookseller in the Strand, detailing the design. But his name being unknown for poetry, and the publisher doubting either his weight in public opinion, his ability, or his diligence, did not deign to return a written answer, but desired a printer to call upon the gentleman in his name and give a verbal negative.

This was at least discourteous; but as Tonson is represented to have been a good-natured man, we may attribute it rather to inadvertency than intentional insult, and at least believe he would not send an impertinent message whatever he may have thought of the supposed presumption of the proposal: an offensive reply however was delivered; and the messenger exhibiting other proofs of impertinence, Goldsmith attempted to chastise him; nor was it till after some violence had taken place that the combatants were separated. This story first transpired at the period of his assaulting Evans the bookseller, but with aggravations, such as that his adversary being the stronger, succeeded in rolling him in the kennel; the object being to fix upon him the charge of being prone to affrays arising from extreme irritability of temper.

In the spring of the year 1763, about the period of ceasing to write the articles on *Belles Lettres* formerly mentioned in the *British Magazine*, he projected a work on biography, for which the cessation of Newbery's compendium on that subject presented, as he believed, an opening. The plan and probably part of the materials provided for the former work were submitted to Dodsley, who acceded to the proposal, and the following agreement was drawn up: it is transcribed from the original in the handwriting of Goldsmith, formerly in the possession of Mr. Nicol of Pall Mall, and now the property of Samuel Rogers, Esq., whose politeness in offering the use of it deserves acknowledgment:—

“It is agreed between Oliver Goldsmith, M. B. on one hand, and James Dodsley on the other, that Oliver Goldsmith shall write for James Dodsley a book called a *Chronological History of the Lives of Eminent Persons of Great Britain and Ireland*, or to that effect, consisting of about two volumes 8vo., about the same size and letter with the *Universal History* published in 8vo.; for the writing of which and compiling the same, James Dodsley shall pay Oliver

Goldsmith three guineas for every printed sheet, so that the whole shall be delivered complete in the space of two years at farthest; James Dodsley, however, shall print the above work in whatever manner or size he shall think fit, only the Universal History above mentioned shall be the standard by which Oliver Goldsmith shall expect to be paid.

"Oliver Goldsmith shall be paid one moiety upon delivery of the whole copy complete, and the other moiety, one half of it at the conclusion of six months, and the other half at the expiration of twelve months next after the publication of the work, James Dodsley giving, however, upon the delivery of the whole copy, two notes for the money left unpaid. Each volume of the above intended work shall not contain more than five-and-thirty sheets, and if they should contain more, the surplus shall not be paid for by James Dodsley. Oliver Goldsmith shall print his name to the said work.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"JAMES DODSLEY.

"March 31st, 1763."

How far he proceeded in this undertaking, and why it was relinquished, are unknown. Upon such a subject, and with his powers of composition we have probably lost by the omission one of the pleasantest books in the language. There were, however, to one in his situation some difficulties attending its execution if meant to be a book of authority. Biography, however fascinating a theme, is not that which an author militant, who is dependent on his daily labour for his daily bread, should choose as a matter of profit. To write a life sometimes requires no inconsiderable portion of a life;* at least to do it as it should be done when distinguished men are the subjects, minutely and well, to throw all the lights upon it that our engagement tacitly binds us whenever practicable to furnish; it is therefore under favourable circumstances only, as when the materials are all under the eye or within the immediate knowledge of the writer, that it can be written as a tale or an essay, *currente calamo*. Like history, of which it forms one of the most interesting portions, it should be a work of investigation; for a name, a date, or even a trifling fact, though abstractedly of little importance in itself, may require time and inquiry to authenticate, or if incorrectly given, is likely to create want of confidence in the author. Diligence in research is one of the necessary duties of a biographer, for the want of which genius cannot always compensate. Even Johnson's Lives of the Poets, admirable in all other respects, suffer in our estimation by their occasional deficiency in facts, which a little more time and labour might have supplied, and the want of which as causing a diminution of our pleasure, we may be permitted to regret.

A similar objection would no doubt have applied to the lives by Goldsmith: what was simply indolence in Johnson, would in him

* Boswell's Life of Johnson, and Middleton's Life of Cicero, the most complete biographies in our language, required a long time for their completion.

have been indolence and the pressure of necessity combined. To the older lives he could probably have added little. In those of more recent date something more than every ones memory or library could supply, would have been expected in return for the demand made upon the public confidence by two octavo volumes from an accredited writer, and two years was much too short a time for serious or minute inquiry. Yet we are scarcely at liberty to speculate on the probable imperfections of any thing from a writer whose pen contained a charm able to compensate for obvious disadvantages. And if upon the subject of natural history, of which he knew practically little, he has written a book which with all its faults has been almost the only one consulted by general readers for sixty years past, what might not have been expected from his labours in biography?

Two publications of Newbery about this period, "Description of Millennium Hall," the supposed seat of a society of ladies in the west of England, in March; and "The Wonders of Nature and Art, being an account of what is most curious and remarkable throughout the World," in four volumes, which appeared in May are supposed to be indebted to his pen for revision, and the latter for some additions to several of the subjects. No direct evidence of his participation in either appears; and the latter opinion may have originated in his acknowledged powers of furnishing amusement for youth.

With another work of more pretensions from the same publisher, his connexion is better established, being employed not only to assist the author, but to revise, to recommend, and to introduce his book to more general favour by a preface and by introductions to the chief subjects which in clearness, spirit, and elegance no writer can hope to excel. The subject was Natural History, and the writer a physician whose name has been long familiar as the compiler of a *Gazetteer*. The advertisement (July 18th, 1763,) states that the whole of the work is printed off in six thick volumes duodecimo, and that on the 1st of August a volume, to be followed by one every succeeding month till completed, will appear, of

"A new and accurate System of Natural History: containing, in vol. 1., The History of Quadrupeds; 2. of Birds; 3. of Fishes and Serpents; 4. of Insects; 5. of Mineral Waters; 6. of Vegetables, &c. By R. Brookes, M. D., Author of the *General Practice of Physic*, &c. &c." Appended to this announcement in the newspaper is the following persuasive to purchasers, as strongly indicative of the hand of Goldsmith as any thing to which he put his name; the first paragraph he introduced into the preface:—

"To the Public.

"Of all the studies which have employed the industrious or amused the idle, perhaps Natural History deserves the preference: other sciences generally terminate in doubt or rest in bare speculation; but here every step is marked with certainty; and while a description of every object around us teaches to supply our wants, it satisfies our curiosity.

"A comprehensive system, however, of this most pleasing science has been hitherto wanting. Nor is it a little surprising, when every other branch of literature has been of late cultivated with so much success, how this most interesting department should have been neglected.

"How far the present performance has supplied the defects, and reformed the errors, of Natural History, is left to the public to determine. Those who have read the author's *Practice of Physic*, and his other medical and geographical compositions, will see evident marks not only of the philosopher but of the accurate and judicious traveller; and cannot doubt that his abilities were adequate to this undertaking, and that he had abundant opportunities to convince himself of the truth of what he had asserted.

"He has indeed, one advantage over almost all former naturalists, namely that of having visited a variety of countries, and examined the productions of each upon the spot. Whatever America or the known parts of Africa have produced to excite curiosity has been carefully observed by him, and compared with the accounts of others.

"This work, though comprised within the compass of six volumes, has employed great part of the author's life; and there is not a figure represented in any of the plates but what was drawn either by himself or his son under his inspection. Nor has the reader's convenience been less considered than his pleasure and improvement. Each of these volumes, if printed as works of this kind usually are, might have made a large quarto, and the whole have been sold for six guineas instead of eighteen shillings; but as the improvement of natural knowledge may conduce to the improvement of religion and piety, it was thought expedient to make this work as cheap as possible, that it might fall within the compass of every studious person, and that all might be acquainted with the great and wonderful works of nature, see the dependence of creature upon creature, and of all upon the Creator."

The revision of this work, in addition to the matter supplied, occupied him several weeks; for the speculation being of moment to the bookseller, was not to be risked without all the aids that some knowledge and much genius could supply. Besides the preface, introduced into his miscellaneous works on their first collection, he wrote the introduction to the history of quadrupeds, which though known to be his by Bishop Percy, Isaac Reed, and others, found no place on that occasion, in consequence of the misunderstanding of the former already alluded to with the publishers, by which they lost his aid previous to publication. Aware of this omission, it occurred to the writer there might be others; and a close examination of the volumes rendered it certain by internal evidence, that, in addition to other traces of his pen, the introductions to the histories of Birds, of Fishes, of Insects, and of Botany, were his, the whole forming about eighty pages, characterized by his usual ingenuity of remark, philosophical spirit, and elegance of manner. Influenced by the same guide of internal evidence, he was led to reject the introduction to

the fifth volume, giving an account of mineral waters, written probably by Brookes himself: the pen of Goldsmith is not to be traced in it; it simply states facts of their supposed combinations and uses in diseases, and therefore by its nature required no power of writing to excite the curiosity or propitiate the favour of the reader.

This book never became popular, being too extensive perhaps too dry, for the juvenile description of readers, and too imperfect for those of more advanced age who required to be really instructed: the plates likewise were wretchedly executed; and the claim set up for the author, of having verified by personal examination all the productions noticed in his volumes belonging to America and the known parts of Africa, would appear, however extensively he may have travelled, impracticable, and thence have occasioned distrust in the general accuracy of his statements.

* * * * *

Two years have elapsed since the preceding notice was written; and the conviction in the mind of the writer of the obligations of this book to Goldsmith have been recently fully confirmed. The first positive intimation was discovered in a newspaper announcement of Brookes's work in 1775, where it is stated by the publishers,* that "four volumes of this edition were corrected by Mr. Oliver Goldsmith," and subsequently more positive proofs have been put into his hands in the receipts for money for the assistance rendered which passed on the occasion. By these it appears his remuneration in the first instance was small; afterwards, in consideration of further labour in correction and revision and adding to the number of prefaces, the original sum in the following receipt was nearly trebled.

"Oct. 11th, 1763.—Received of Mr. John Newbery eleven guineas in full, for writing the introductions and preface to Dr. Brookes's Natural History.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

Two items in another account state that Dr. Goldsmith is to have credit for

"3 Prefaces to the Natural History	-	-	-	-	£6 6 0
Correcting 4 vols. Brookes's Nat. History	-	-	-	-	- 0 0 0"

In another set of memorandums of the publisher, eighteen in number, to settle accounts with various persons, the sixteenth on the list is the following:—

"Mrs. Brookes's, and charge for alterations made in the plates and the printed copy that was obliged to be cancelled	-	-	-	-	£26 0 0
--	---	---	---	---	---------

"And to Dr. Goldsmith, writing prefaces, and correcting the work	30	0	0	
--	----	---	---	--

	In all	-	-	£56 0 0"
--	--------	---	---	----------

During the summer, he appears to have been frequently in London, notwithstanding a press of literary occupation, enjoying with

*Carnan and Newbery:—it appeared in opposition to "Animated Nature."

Johnson and Boswell several of their social tavern meetings. He had already impressed the latter, as he confesses in his work, with a high opinion of Johnson, by encomiums passed upon his humanity, a theme on which Goldsmith was eloquent and on which he always rendered due honour to his friend. Speaking of Mr. Levett, the well known inmate of the moralist, his observation was, "He is poor and honest, and that is recommendation enough for Johnson." Of another person whose character was more exceptionable, and who had paid to misfortune part of the penalty of his errors, he said, "He is now become miserable, and that insures the protection of Johnson."

The first exclusive meeting they seem to have enjoyed, and the fact is interesting in literary history, took place at the Mitre Tavern, in Fleet Street, on the 1st of July 1763, when Goldsmith, always willing to throw out a provocative to discussion, started the paradox, "that knowledge was not desirable on its own account, for it often was a source of unhappiness," an idea, the fallacy of which he could at other times eloquently expose.

On the 6th, having met again at the same place with other guests of Boswell, he took ground against that maxim of the constitution, "that the King can do no wrong," affirming, "that what was morally false could not be politically true;* and as the King might, in the exercise of his regal power, command and cause the doing of what was wrong, it certainly might be said in sense and reason that he could do wrong." The answer to this was obvious: the King may command the committal of an improper public act, but his minister only can execute it; the latter therefore takes the responsibility by making the deed his own; a dilemma which it is always in his power to avoid by resigning his office.

These are specimens of that desire to take the weak side of an argument into which ingenious men are sometimes betrayed, either by affecting singularity or influenced by the whim of the moment: in Johnson this was often thought perversity; in Goldsmith it was termed absurdity, or want of knowledge of his subject, though really we may suppose caused by the wish to exhibit ingenuity, or excite discussion, for no follies of this kind find place in his writings. Disputation is not a pleasing characteristic in any person, even of eminence: we can rarely think well of him who attempts to overpower our common sense, or destroy the force of generally admitted truths by sophistry however ingenious. Young men who believe they possess talent are frequently fond of it, not conscious that they often render themselves disagreeable by what they mistake for cleverness. Dr. Johnson confessed to this disposition at an early period of life, and the pages of Boswell render it doubtful whether he ever wholly conquered the desire. "When I was a boy," he said, "I used always to choose the wrong side of a debate, because most

* This pointed sentence, with a little variation was used more than once by a popular baronet on the hustings at Westminster, previous to the reform of Parliament, in allusion to the alleged corrupt return of many members. Such practices, he contended, "being morally wrong could not be politically right."

ingenious things, that is to say, most new things, could be said upon it." Goldsmith was similarly inclined: he acknowledged to Johnson, and there is an allusion⁴ to the fact in the story of George Primrose, as well as in another passage struck out of the *Vicar of Wakefield*, "that when he first began to write, he determined to commit to paper nothing but what was new; but he afterwards found that what was new was generally false, and from that time was no longer solicitous about novelty." In conversation however as we see, he could not always resist the temptation.

In the month of September, a small volume in which he was supposed to have a share, appeared from Newbery, to take its chance among a variety of competitors of more bulk and pretension, named "*The Martial Review; or, a General History of the late War. Together with the Definitive Treaty; and some Reflections on the probable consequences of the Peace.*"

The only part that can be claimed for him is the preface, less finished perhaps than what usually came from his hand: the body of the work, which first appeared in the "*Reading Mercury*" newspaper, from the pen of some person connected with the family of Christopher Smart, was now reprinted for the benefit of its members. For this unfortunate poet he entertained a degree of regard and compassion which was evinced in several efforts of active benevolence. On some occasions he is known to have given him money; at other times to have contributed literary assistance; and some time afterward when his unhappy friend was suffering at once under occasional confinement for debt, and the more dreadful affliction of mental derangement, he drew up an appeal to the public with the view of raising subscriptions for his support and release, though doubts exist whether it ever came before the public. Bishop Percy had seen this address in MS.; and in a letter to Malone (October 17th, 1786,)* mentions it among other detached pieces of the Poet which he wished to procure, as "a paper which he (Goldsmith) wrote to set about a subscription for poor Smart, the mad poet: I believe this last was never printed." It was not recovered by that prelate or his correspondent, and the present writer has likewise failed to find it in any of the periodical publications of the time.

In the first paragraph of the preface to this '*Review*,' we find a pretty exact definition of what his own histories, written subsequently, aimed to be,—the separation of "what is substantial and material from what is circumstantial and is useless in history; but the importance claimed for this slight work, a duodecimo, may excite a smile in the readers of more voluminous accounts of the period described: bold claims upon public confidence he probably thought the most certain means of obtaining it. A favourable notice of this production, written by him likewise in all probability from an item in one of his accounts with Newbery, appeared in the *Critical Review*.

The life of an author during the greater part of the last century,

* MS. correspondence communicated by Dr. H. U. Thomson.

seems from the small remuneration obtained in return for his exertions, to have been one of almost constant labour: he enjoyed few intervals of rest; his exertions rarely kept pace with his wants; and the conclusion of one undertaking proved but the signal for the commencement of another. Without great diligence, his bread was consumed before it was earned, and by thus anticipating his resources, he was often compelled to tax the present hour for the enjoyment of the past, in such compilations as promised the readiest supply. He has himself told us in an early production,* that "authors like race-horses, should be fed but not fattened; the observation was scarcely necessary, as few have had to complain of repletion by the bounty of even their warmest admirers; and he had long afterward to lament that far from furnishing him with luxuries, they scarcely gave him bread.

As illustrative of the number and variety of his labours at this period, the following account rendered to his principal employer, is transcribed from the original in his own handwriting now before the writer; the sum specified for the first on the list is to be considered from what has been said as only the first payment.

"Brookes' History	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	£11	11	0
Preface to Universal History	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	0
Preface to Rhetoric	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	0
Preface to Chronicle	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	0
History of England	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	21	0	0
The Life of Christ	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	10	0
The Life [Lives] of the Fathers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	10	0
Critical and Monthly	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	0
								£63	0	0

"Received October 11, 1763, the contents
of Mr. Newbery.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

We may presume that some of these articles, such as the History of England, were only in progress. Those charged here "Critical and Monthly," were either contributions under those heads to the Christians Magazine, or perhaps criticisms on works belonging to Newbery which he found means of getting inserted in the respective Reviews of that name.

Beside this general acknowledgment, separate receipts as will appear were signed for the chief pieces, but the sum thus due to him being insufficient to liquidate the debt to the publisher, 111*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.* stated in a preceding page, he gave a promissory note for the balance:—

"I promise to pay Mr. John Newbery or order forty-eight pounds one shilling and sixpence on demand for value received.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"October 11, 1763."

Few circumstances of a merely personal nature were more grati-

* Inquiry into Polite Learning. The phrase is said to be borrowed from Charles IX. of France.

ying to him, than the acquaintance of Mr., afterwards Sir Joshua, Reynolds, which by two of his contemporaries was said to have commenced in 1762, and as they understood, by an accidental meeting in the chambers of Dr. Johnson. As men of genius, they were soon attracted to each other; occasional interviews here, or in private associations of artists among whom Goldsmith seems to have been well known, created a more thorough knowledge of qualities that commanded mutual esteem; while from their different pursuits, no opening existed for collision, or that jealousy of contemporary merit of which both with whatever truth have been accused. Their friendship was literally the union of Poetry and Painting.

The painter might even then be considered at the head of his profession. The poet had not yet exhibited any striking proof of devotion to that particular art in which he afterward so much excelled, although the latent fire was probably not unobserved by one who a few years before, had the discernment and sense to appreciate and select as soon as he saw them Johnson and Burke for his friends. In Goldsmith he may have been willing also to know and to aid unfriended merit; and the latter saw in the long and severe struggle which he had hitherto maintained with poverty and obscurity, the advantage of cultivating the acquaintance of one who by skill and success in an elegant art, had escaped from both. The painter wished to draw him into that close association which he had sought with other eminent men, and from which in the corruscations of genius mutual profit is derived. The author, equally desirous of similar advantage, found the further benefit of meeting at the table of the artist persons of rank and talents whom he might not have seen elsewhere; his name became more familiar from being a guest there; his succeeding publications in consequence gained more immediate attention from many of that class who admire less, as the writer is less known in society. To be an associate of the men of eminence frequently found at the table of Reynolds, formed of itself a stamp of character which they could not sufficiently appreciate, and it contributed to silence something of that fastidious criticism applied to his person and manners, by a few whose discrimination probably extended not to the qualities of his mind.

In order to increase the opportunities of social intercourse between persons formed to delight general society and each other, the Literary Club was formed; a name not assumed by themselves, but given to the association by others from the talents and celebrity of its principal members. The proposers were Johnson and Reynolds, who selected Burke, Goldsmith, Mr. Topham Beauclerk, Mr. Langton, Sir John Hawkins, and Dr. Nugent, a physician and father of Mrs. Burke, as associates; to whom, in consequence of the frequent absence of Mr. Beauclerk and Sir John Hawkins, were added Mr. Chamier and Mr. Dyer; the former Under Secretary at War, and well known in the fashionable circles of London; the latter a man of general erudition, a friend of the Burkes, and formerly a comissary in the army. They agreed to sup together every Monday evening, afterwards changed to Friday, at the Turk's Head, in Gerrard Street, Soho. Sir Joshua Reynolds first started the project

according to that accurate inquirer Malone, who writes to Bishop Percy, July 7th, 1805, "Since the death of our *founder*, Sir Joshua Reynolds, we have elected twenty-three new members, of whom we have been deprived by death of four." Others attribute the first idea to Dr. Johnson.

The formation of this club as a matter frequently mentioned in literary history would scarcely require notice here, but for its being a favourite resort of the Poet, and for the period of its first meeting being forgotten by the members. Johnson and Reynolds who seem to divide the credit of the design, according to Boswell, thought it in 1764; Bishop Percy believed it to be at a later period; Sir John Hawkins says it was in 1763; and Malone, who took some pains to inquire into the matter, is disposed to give it a still earlier date, as appears by the following passage in another letter to the same prelate, August 11th, 1807.* "I have thoughts of printing for our private use only, a list of our members (of the club) from the foundation, with the dates of their admission, the places they have filled, and the time of such deaths as have occurred. I have made the commencement (in a note in Boswell's *Life of Johnson*) in 1764, but I suspect it ought rather to be dated in 1762. How is this?"

The time thus assigned, or the following year, 1763, as stated by Sir John Hawkins, is probably the true date; for the latter in speaking of Goldsmith as a member of the club, expressly says in his usual harshness of phrase, that he considered him for some time as a mere drudge of the booksellers, and was surprised subsequently, on the publication of his poem, to find genius and noble sentiments in one from whom he had expected neither. The poem appeared in 1764; and to have gained any material knowledge of him their meetings must have commenced at an earlier period. These discrepancies of opinion evince the difficulty of ascertaining facts even from contemporary testimony, when we find even the very founders of the society disagree as to the period of its origin. All the accounts however may be reconciled by considering what was probably the case, that several partial meetings of the members had occurred previous to its being regularly constituted and confined to the gentlemen already mentioned, and before a specific day or place was appropriated to their meeting. The date is of no more moment here than as evidence that Goldsmith was appreciated by many of the greatest names of the day, before he became known to the world.

Toward the end of the year he appears to have been again much in want of money, by the larger loan than usual implied in the following acknowledgment:—

"Received from Mr. Newbery twenty-five guineas, for which I promise to account.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"December 17, 1763.

£26 5 0."

* MS. correspondence of W. R. Mason, Esq.

One of the causes which tradition has stated for this supply was a journey said to have been undertaken by him into the country; to Yorkshire according to some, whence originated either from chance, or from some incident of an interesting description that occurred during the excursion, the tale of the Vicar of Wakefield. But a story was told by Mr. English, attributing the loan to another cause; that Goldsmith having about this period met a person in London whom he had known on the Continent, invited him to dinner at a tavern, and advantage being taken of his good nature by the guest, all the money he possessed was either borrowed under some plausible pretext, or procured by less justifiable means, and in either case being wholly lost he was obliged to quit his lodgings for a time, from inability to satisfy impatient creditors.

A degree of corroboration is given to this anecdote by his having been really absent from his usual abode at Islington during the winter quarter between Christmas and March; the fact, indeed, admits of explanation in the greater convenience of being in town in such a season, when a short journey as it now appears, was then a matter of some moment from defective police, especially at night. The attraction of the club claimed him one night in the week, and private society had its temptations more frequently; in which case, the danger as well as fatigue of a late walk, was not inconsiderable. It will be seen likewise that although absent he retained and paid for his room.

The account of his difficulties may be in substance true; for those of literary men were too frequent not to give rise to apprehensions for their personal liberty. But as pecuniary embarrassments convey something of tacit reproach by implying want of principle in the debtor, it is to be remembered that his, like those of many other honest though indigent men of talents, were small in amount and commonly incurred for the absolute necessities of life; they became serious only from the state of the law which permitted arrest for so small a sum as five pounds; a misfortune from which all the talents and high moral principle of Johnson could not shield him. The character of a debtor however may be safely estimated by the conduct of his creditor, and judged by this standard Goldsmith stood high; it is believed that he was never subjected, though threatened on an occasion to be mentioned hereafter, to the mortification of arrest; several to whom he was indebted believed he would pay them when he could; and such as knew him well, we know from more than one unexceptionable testimony, were content to wait his convenience and even supply his wants when there was no immediate prospect of repayment. There is one class of tradesmen who among the necessitous may be considered more particularly the touchstone of credit, and of these "honest William Filby" as he was termed by the Poet, the tailor before mentioned, placed such implicit faith in his honour as to furnish his wardrobe with all that an occasionally expensive taste required, assured he should not ultimately be a loser by his confidence. From the books of this person it appears that toward the end of 1762, and early in the following year, he supplied

clothes of a description by no means implying unprosperous circumstances, to the amount of fifteen pounds, for which he received in August following a draft on Newbery at six day's sight: a prudent clause is indeed introduced in the ledger, in which it is noted, that this draft "*when paid*, will be in full," &c.; it was nevertheless duly honoured.

To his necessities which were pretty obvious, and his disinclination to epistolary communication which was equally known, Dr. Grainger who had returned to England from St. Christopher's for some months, partly with the view of bringing out his poem of the Sugar Cane, thus humorously alludes in a letter to Dr. Percy, dated March 25th, 1764.

"When I taxed little Goldsmith for not writing as he promised, his answer was, that he never wrote a letter in his life; and faith I believe him—except to a bookseller for money."*

The "Preface to Rhetoric" charged in a preceding memorandum at two guineas is not ascertained, but may probably have been a partnership school-book, printed for Dodsley early in January 1764, under the title of "Elements of Rhetoric and Poetry: exemplified in a select collection of passages from the best authors in Verse and Prose."† This book has been sought in vain.

Another piece "Preface to Chronicle" in the same account, has not been discovered, no publication with such a title being traced among the literary advertisements of the day.

The translations of the "Life of Christ" and the "Lives of the Fathers" appeared first, it is believed, in the Christian's Magazine; and in 1774, a few months after the death of the translator, were published with his name in a separate form by Carnan and Newbery.‡ The receipt bears a similar date as several others:—

"Oct. 11th, 1763.—Received of Mr. John Newbery twenty-one pounds for translating the Life of Christ and the Lives of the Fathers.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

A publication meant to compete with the Universal History, but more condensed and therefore more calculated for general readers, being projected in 1762 by several booksellers among whom Newbery took the lead, was about this period announced for publication. It was to be comprised in twelve volumes large octavo, one to appear every month until completed; the first came out on the 2d April

* MS. correspondence of Mr. Mason.

† Public Advertiser, Jan. 11, 1764.

‡ Among a variety of his pieces enumerated in the advertisement on this occasion, are—"An History of the Life of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To which is added the Life of the Blessed Virgin Mary; extracted from the Holy Scriptures and the best Ecclesiastical Historians. For the Instruction of Youth. Price one shilling."

"An History of the Lives, Actions, Travels, Sufferings, and Deaths of the most eminent Martyrs and Primitive Fathers of the Church in the first Four Centuries. For the Instruction of Youth."—*Morning Chronicle*, July 1, 1774.

under the title of—"A General History of the World from the Creation to the present Time, &c. &c. By William Guthrie Esq., John Gray Esq., and others eminent in this branch of literature."

To this Goldsmith contributed the preface; one of those well written introductory notices, presenting a sparkling commentary on what often proved to be a dull text, and in which he and Dr. Johnson possessed nearly a monopoly of the trade as well as of the excellence. This branch of authorship now nearly extinct, required practised skill, considerable ingenuity, and a knowledge of what there should be at least, if not what there was, in the book it introduced; like ingenious Counsel in the Courts, such advocates say for their clients, what the clients want the skill or the boldness to say for themselves; and it may be remarked that Smollett whose pen on almost every sort of composition was in demand, seems not to have attained particular distinction in this. Of the sum received for the preface we are left in no doubt by the following specific acknowledgment, in addition to his own charge given in a previous page:—

"Oct. 11th, 1763.—Received of Mr. John Newbery, three guineas for a Preface to the History of the World.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

About half this piece only has been hitherto printed, being taken probably from the first rude draught communicated to Dr. Percy in manuscript. From the tenor of the concluding paragraph it would appear as if the writer had likewise taken a share in the body of the work, excepting it be supposed he speaks in the character of the chief editor or author, Mr. Guthrie. Whoever be the supposed speaker, the last sentence without doubt was a burst of personal feeling in allusion to his own slow progress to reputation, the prospect of which after seven years' constant and nearly unknown labours, began at length to open to his view. The complete preface will be found in the new edition of his works accompanying the present volumes. "Were he who now particularly entreats the reader's candid examination to mention the part he has had in this work himself, he is well convinced, and that without any affected modesty, that such a discovery would only show the superiority of his associates in this undertaking; but it is not from his friendship or his praise, but from their former labours in the learned world that they are to expect their reward. Whatever be the fate of this history, their reputation is in no danger, but will still continue rising; for they have found by its gradual increase already, that the approbation of folly is loud and transient; that of wisdom still, but lasting."

No positive evidence exists by which to ascertain whether any portion of the history itself proceeded from his pen; and in so voluminous a work consisting of about five hundred and fifty large and closely printed pages in each volume, it would be vain to search for those coincidences of sentiment, expression, and manner which

have assisted the writer on other occasions. The mass of matter in the work is very great, the labour must have been long, and the writers various; but it required rather diligence than genius, and was probably performed by those laborious and not unuseful men found hanging on the outskirts of literature in a great metropolis, who though sensible and well informed, being unable to attain eminence are content to be simply industrious. The price paid for it being no more than about thirty shillings per sheet, offered no temptation to a higher order of writers.

Surprise will be excited that in a history of the world, England the native country of the writers and readers of such a book, and as might be supposed possessing the strongest interest in the estimation of both, should be forgotten, and no explanation given of the cause; an omission difficult to explain except by supposing that if well executed it would have interfered with some other work from the same publishers. It is probable that Goldsmith having undertaken to draw up some such compilation in his leisure hours, found he could make it more popular and profitable as a separate work, and that Newbery concurring in opinion, the original plan of giving it in this publication was dropped? Whatever truth there be in the conjecture, it is certain he had been for some months occupied on this subject, and with some ingenuity adopted a new form and title as a means of fixing public attention.

He had been early impressed, as appears in several passages of the *Inquiry into Polite Learning*, with the difficulty of poor and unfriended authors rising into literary reputation; he believed that their books were not read; their merits, when known to write for bread, derided by some and neglected by others. In this opinion he seems to have found something of a kindred feeling in Johnson, who wrote from the heart, in that pathetic line—"Slow rises worth by poverty deprest." To obviate the fancied disadvantage and make an experiment on public taste, he was willing to diverge from the beaten track, and try what degree of attention could be drawn toward a book supposed to emanate from the titled and the wealthy. A harmless deception was therefore practised, such as authors conceive themselves privileged to use; one which might assist a useful book, but was not likely to support a bad one. On the 26th June 1764 came out, "for the use of the young nobility and gentry: in two pocket volumes, price 6s. bound; the *History of England in a series of Letters from a Nobleman to his Son.*"*

The success of this little work whether owing to its merit or its title, exceeded all expectation; it soon became a general favourite, was put into the hands of educated youth; and even found a high place in the regard of the better informed; numerous reprints have been made of it for a series of years, and if less called for than formerly in consequence of numberless competitors in the same field, newer indeed but far inferior in desert, it is still occasionally seen in the reading of adults; many of whom, it is to be feared, have been

* *Public Advertiser*.—The first announcement appeared on the 17th May.

beguiled by its brief, clear, and sprightly narrative from the perusal of works of greater length and ampler details on the history of their country.*

The philosophical spirit pervading the volumes forms one of their chief attractions; indicative of an enlarged mind not so solicitous to detail minute events in history, as to draw lessons of instruction from a comprehensive view of the whole. The impression created by the title is therefore well carried on. We can readily believe that a nobleman of talents, devoting more than common attention to the education of his son, might write such letters; even occasional mistakes favour the supposition of not being so much the production of a professed author, as the less studied labours of one writing for a private object. The observations are just, forcible, and often profound; so much so occasionally as to have been considered by some rather above the capacity of boys, to which he replied that he wrote not for children, but for educated youth approaching to manhood, whose capacities were strengthened by exercise on familiar subjects. No undue political bias pervades the work. Each party in the state receives that degree of praise or censure to which they appear fairly entitled, the writer preserving on the one hand becoming leaning to the regal office and authority when threatened by factious or ambitious enemies, and on the other that regard for rational liberty which all constitutional writers display.

A few errors though of little moment occur in names, dates, and minor points, which it would have required little trouble to correct; these confirm the impression that they were written in haste and without sufficient reference to larger preceding works. The mode of composition, given on the authority of a writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* who professes to have known him at the time, and partly confirmed by admissions of his own in conversation, sufficiently explains how they arose; this plan however must be considered rather occasional than as one invariably followed.

In the morning he read Hume, Rapin, Carte, and Kennet; made a few memoranda for his guidance; walked out with a friend or two for a country excursion, of which he was always fond; returned to a temperate dinner and a cheerful evening, and seized a few hours from sleep to write as much as he had contemplated by the studies of the morning. He professed to derive advantage in facility of composition, an easier style, and more perfect knowledge of the subject, by thus having more time to revolve it; but we may believe in this case that his memory was more taxed than his authorities; and if the former misled him at the moment, the error of the night was forgotten to be rectified by recurrence to more certain guides, that of books, in the morning.

No very deep critical skill is required to pronounce it beyond all competition, the most finished and elegant summary of our history,

* That it is still read with attention by the educated and able, appears from the fact that a daily journal of great political influence, quoted and argued more than once from some of its sentiments during the excitement and discussion of a late great political measure (Parliamentary Reform.) No suspicion seems to have been entertained by the writer who referred to the work, that its author was Goldsmith.

in such a compass, that has been, or is likely to be, written; because few who possess the powers of its writer are likely to choose the same mode of treating the subject. Neither is his felicity of style likely to be equalled; ease, elegance, and perspicuity will ever claim a large share of public favour even when minor blemishes are known to be present. To these qualities, as well as the ingenuity and depth of the reflections, were owing the translation of the volumes into French by Madame Brissot, wife of the celebrated leader in the French Revolution. It appeared in two volumes octavo, 1786—1790, under the name of "*Lettres Philosophiques et Politiques sur l'Histoire de l'Angleterre*," and met with considerable success; her husband added notes to the translation.

It is illustrative of the neglect shown to the detail of Goldsmith's literary labours, that his claim to so popular a compendium of English history is unknown to the great majority of readers; nor are there many persons professedly devoted to literary inquiry more familiar with the fact.* At the period of publication no particular secrecy being observed, the booksellers as well as his literary acquaintance were better informed; when a second edition appeared he sent copies to several friends; and on Dr. Percy calling upon him about the same time, the volumes were with something of a jocular apology for the humble nature of the attempt, put into his hands. Davies, for whom he afterwards wrote the *History of England* in four volumes to which his name is attached, was equally aware of his claim to this; and he himself smiled at what he thought the novelty of the deception, and jested upon its success.

The title-page however misled most persons, who gave the credit—for considerable credit became attached to the performance—to such members of the peerage as had cultivated a taste for letters; by some to Lord Chesterfield, by others to Lord Orrery, but by the greater number to Lord Lyttleton; and the latter, however high in literary fame, was so little displeased with popular opinion on this point as to take no trouble to contradict it. To him therefore the *Letters* are still assigned. He had at this period some slight knowledge of Goldsmith, and is alleged to have given him shortly afterwards hopes of being provided for by an appointment under government, a promise which, if ever made, it is unnecessary to say was never fulfilled. Whether it was unwillingness to deprive his expected patron of his reputed literary honours, or supposed danger to his own fame when better established, by connecting it with so slight a work, he never afterwards publicly claimed it even by that coy implication common to authors or their publishers, in attaching to announcements of such works as they choose to acknowledge the names of those that are not. Thus the *Citizen of the World* and *Vicar of Wakefield*, which had not his name in the title-page, regularly followed advertisements of the *Traveller*; not so

* Mr. Campbell in his life of Mrs. Siddons seems to attribute this work to Coombe, author of the *Tour of Dr. Syntax*; were there any doubt about the writer his claim would scarcely be allowed, for though dying at an advanced age, he must have been very young when it was published.

the Letters of the alleged Nobleman, which by not being seen in such company, appeared to be tacitly disclaimed.

He received, we are told by Davies in the *Life of Garrick*, for his three *Histories of England*, this being one of the number, 750*l.* or 800*l.*; a sum which is considerably exaggerated. He had himself indeed in his character of publisher, paid 552*l.* for the work in four volumes, and the abridgment of it in one; this would leave 200*l.* as the produce of the "Letters." Twenty-five sheets only of letter-press form the two volumes; and as Dodsley allowed only three guineas for an octavo sheet on a subject requiring more inquiry and research, a less sum would probably have been considered sufficient for a duodecimo sheet on history, although the quantity of matter might have been as great. Whether this was experienced, the following receipt renders questionable; no other acknowledgment connected with the volumes can be found, and excepting he experienced further liberality in succeeding reprints of them, the whole amount paid him was probably under 50*l.*

"Oct. 11, 1763.—Received of Mr. John Newbery twenty-one pounds, which with what I received before is in full for the copy of the *History of England* in a series of Letters two volumes in 12mo.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

To such as have not seen the work, or perused it more carelessly from not knowing who was the author, the introductory portion touching generally on the subject of history, will be new and give a good idea of his general manner. He recants here the contemptuous censure passed on the study of mathematics in a preceding publication; the results no doubt of further reflection and experience; logic and metaphysics however stand no higher in his estimation than his friend Beatty said they did when at College.

Examples of his repetitions of a favourite sentiment occasionally occur; in the first letter we find one which he had previously used in the *Inquiry into Polite Learning*,* and again put into the mouth of Croaker in the *Good-natured Man*;†—"When all is done, human life is at the greatest and the best, but like a froward child that must be played with and humoured a little to keep it quiet till it falls asleep, and then the care is over." It seems to be taken from Sir William Temple's *Heads for an Essay upon the different Conditions of Life and Fortune*. "After all life is but a trifle, that should be played with till we lose it, and then it is not worth regretting." Another used in three of his pieces, that "passions, like fermentation in liquors, disturb the youthful breast only to refine it," is in part applied to our Government connected with the great struggle of Charles I. with his Parliament:—"The laws became more precise, and the subjects more ready to obey, as if a previous fermentation in the constitution was necessary to its subsequent refinement." In the

* See Works, vol. i.

† Act I. Scene iv. See Works, vol. iv.

thirty-fifth letter, when speaking of the murder of David Rizzio, the favourite of Mary Queen of Scots, he repeats of him what he had said in a paper on the different "Schools of Music" printed in the *British Magazine*:* "Thus ended Rizzio, a man who has been more spoken of perhaps than any other who rose from so mean a station. What his other talents to please might have been, is unknown; but certain it is, that several indications of his skill in music remain even to the present time: all those pleasing Scotch airs which are set in such a peculiar taste, being universally allowed to be of his composition."

To these "Letters" his subsequent *History of England* in four volumes, is pretty largely indebted.

CHAPTER XIV.

Oratorio of the Captivity.—His threatened Arrest.—The Traveller.

His poetical powers, which had lain in some degree dormant, at least in compositions of length, by the continued struggle for existence that works in prose enabled him better to maintain, were about this time called into action in the composition of an Oratorio. Two copies in his own hand-writing are still extant, though without a name, but it has been usually known to the few who possessed any information on the matter, as the "Captivity;" and that which appears the most correct transcript is given in the last English edition of his Works.

One of the inducements to the undertaking was the prevailing popularity of such performances, in consequence of the admiration excited by the music of Handel. Another was perhaps the success of his friend Christopher Smart, in a similar composition named "Hannah," which with the music by Mr. Worgan, was performed at the King's Theatre on the 3d April 1764. A third and more probable cause was an acquaintance formed shortly before with Doctor Boyce, the eminent musician, by whom he had been either promised, or led to expect, it would be set to music, and whose compositions in this way enjoyed a just celebrity. Whatever ground there may have been for this expectation it was not fulfilled, from what cause is not known. Neither is any notice taken of the work by his friends or by memoir writers, not even by Dr. Percy or by Isaac Reed, the latter of whom wrote two sketches of his life, one for the *Biographia Dramatica*, and another for the edition of *Essays* collected by Wright; yet the fact of his having written it was well known to both. Their accounts indeed being cursory, it was not probably deemed necessary to enumerate all his productions.

* See Works, vol. i.

The manuscript, now lying before the writer, seems to be a clean copy, having few erasures, but two of the songs vary slightly from what they appear in the first collection of his poetical works. To the Poet it probably proved, what he no doubt considered it from the labour employed and the little return received, an indifferent speculation. He retained it in his own possession for some months, when being either pressed for money, or despairing of having it introduced to the world in the manner originally designed, he sold the copy to Dodsley, with a right also to Newbery, as appears by the following receipt, transcribed from the original, now in the possession of Mr. Murray. It thus became of no more value to him than the small sum which the mere copyright produced:—

“Received from Mr. Dodsley ten guineas for an Oratorio, which he and Mr. Newbery are to share.

“OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

“Oct. 31st, 1764.”

The composition of an Oratorio is not perhaps a very difficult thing in itself, for though dramatic in form, it is not so in spirit; we expect no involvement of plot, exhibition of character, or working of passion; neither the pomp of tragedy, nor the verisimilitude of life expected from comedy; neither is the poetry usually of the highest order, because the first consideration in all such compositions is the music. Without this be excellent, or at least of a superior description, all efforts of the poet will be vain; and the consciousness of being dependent upon the labours of another for the success of his own, may render him more careless of excellence.

Besides, musicians think themselves authorized to take great liberties with verses; and no writer would willingly permit such as have cost him much thought and labour, to be excruciated upon even a musical bed of torture. Such works therefore seldom exhibit, and possibly do not require, the display of pre-eminent genius.

The subject is the captivity in Babylon, and the period of time that immediately preceded the capture of the city by Cyrus. It is in three acts; the persons are,—First and second Jewish Prophets—Israelitish Woman—First and second Chaldean Priests—Chaldean Woman—Chorus of Youths and Virgins. The Scene,—The Banks of the River Euphrates near Babylon.

It opens in a strain of lamentation for their lost country and captive state by the Jewish prophets, who although in bondage by a nation of idolaters, find consolation in the knowledge and worship of the true God. While occupied by their griefs, the Chaldean priests enter with an invitation to strike the lyre in honour of a festival day to their gods, and join in the general revelry; the invitation is scornfully declined.

The second act continues the attempt of the Chaldeans to persuade the Jews to join in their worship, when the chief prophet at length pouring a strain, imprecates the judgment of Heaven on the blasphemers of Babylon, and in return is threatened with more ponderous

chains and a darker dungeon than such as encircle his blind and captive king Zedekiah.

In the third act the Chaldeans express assurance of the continuance of their empire, notwithstanding the Jewish denunciations of wo; in the meantime a corse is seen borne to the bank of the river, which proves to be that of Zedekiah, and while the Jews are praying for signal punishment on the authors of his sufferings and death, a loud shout is heard, the army of Cyrus suddenly pours into the city, and the kingdom of Babylon is overthrown.

The two songs which were not so connected with the business of the piece as to prevent being detached from it, found their way into circulation previous to his death. By comparing their construction in the Oratorio with the state in which they were afterwards printed, it will be seen by the lines in Italics that the same judicious revision applied to more elaborate productions, was not neglected even in songs: on what occasion the alterations were made, does not appear, probably for some compilation of Davies, as he possessed the corrected copies.

“ Oh Memory, thou fond deceiver,
Still importunate and vain,
To former joys recurring ever.
And turning all the past to pain.

*“ Hence intruder, most distressing,
Seek the happy and the free;
The wretch who wants each other blessing,
Ever wants a friend in thee.*

* * * * *

“ To the last moment of his breath,
On Hope the wretch relies;
And e'en the pang preceding death
Bids expectation rise.

“ Hope, like the gleaming taper's light,
Adorns and cheers our way;
And still, as darker grows the night,
Emits a brighter ray.”

The silence of Bishop Percy regarding not only the Captivity but other works, is to be attributed to forgetfulness, or the displacement of his papers, as it appears he was fully informed on the subject by Mr. George Steevens. When directing the miscellaneous works to be prepared for the press, doubts had arisen in his mind, without reasonable cause as it proved, of the authenticity of one of the epilogues, although it had been put into his hands by the Poet himself, and under this impression, he wrote to that gentleman to apply to Mrs. Bulkley, the actress, for whom it was written, to inquire whether she remembered the lines and the occasion for which they were intended, but that lady had long been dead. The Bishop likewise omits to notice the other productions mentioned in the reply of Steevens; as if having once finished the memoir, he was indisposed to make additions which might branch out into more extensive in-

quiries, and be productive of more labour than his plan, or leisure, or time of life permitted.

Another of his omissions, or what seems like such, is more accountable. In writing to Steevens, it will be observed, he says, "I have another unprinted poem of Dr. G's, in his own hand writing, that is undoubtedly his, which is of more consequence." No such additional poem appears in the edition of the works with which he was connected, except the quarrelling epilogue, intended at one time for *She Stoops to Conquer*, and to be spoken in dialogue by Mrs. Bulkley and Miss Catley. Had he meant this epilogue by the "unprinted poem of more consequence," some allusion would probably have been made to its nature when inquiring respecting the origin of a similar composition from the same hands. But the subject of it is not mentioned, nor can an explanation be obtained now, the nearest relative* of the Prelate declaring to the writer that nothing respecting Goldsmith either in letters or manuscript pieces exists among his papers; but had such a production been by accident omitted by him in the first edition of the works, it is not probable, from the unfortunate irritation which existed between him and the publishers, he would have given it in a second. The application to Mr. Steevens and his reply are dated September 1797.

The Bishop writes—

"Your obliging letter was received this morning and merits my best thanks, which I could not defer presenting a moment. Yet I fear you will have reasons to repent of your readiness to serve your friends, when you find it has encouraged me to trouble you again.

"The epilogue, of which I sent the exordium and conclusion, I find (by an endorsement which escaped me when I copied them for you) was intended to be spoken by Mrs. Bulkley. I wish she could by some means be asked if she remembers for what play it was intended. It may possibly, after all, be not written by Goldsmith, but only given for him to correct, though I think he would scarce have adopted the four lines in his epilogue to his printed comedy from it, had it not been his own.

"He gave it me among a parcel of letters and papers some written by himself and some addressed to him without much explanation. But I have always considered it as his. Yet it would be awkward if after being inserted in his works, some other author should prove his claim to it, and therefore before I close with the booksellers who are impatiently pressing, I wish if possible to ascertain this point.

"I have another unprinted Poem of Dr. G's, in his own hand-writing that is undoubtedly his, which is of more consequence, together with many original and some very curious letters; so that I shall not abate of my terms with the booksellers even if this should be withdrawn. However, neither to them nor to the actress would I in the present stage of the business, excite any doubt concerning that

* Mrs. Isted of Ecton, Northamptonshire, surviving daughter of Dr. Percy.— Since this was written her death has been announced.

epilogue of which I suppose the lines I sent you are sufficient to awake any recollection which she may have on the subject.”*

The answer, much of which is omitted, though very characteristic of the satire and point of the writer, runs thus :—

“ Since I received your favour, I have spent some hours in a fruitless inquiry about the epilogue you have quoted, but even the accurate Mr. Reed can supply no information on the subject. As there is nothing appropriate in this composition, perhaps the author produced it as a piece of sale work for the service of a chance customer, or for his own future use. Finding, however, no commodious vent or employment for his ware, he might afterwards have worked up some of its materials into another fabric. I may add, that several of his lines glance at the sentimental pieces of his dramatic rivals Kelly and Cumberland, and therefore on mature consideration might have been suppressed.

“ In the meantime it is fit you should learn that any present attempt to throw a ring-fence round the poetical demesnes of Goldsmith, will be ineffectual, as a late discovery has been made of a dramatic piece in his own handwriting; it turned up among the papers of the late Mr. Dodsley. * * * The Oratorio in question entitled Captivity, was sold by the Doctor to Dodsley, Oct. 31st, 1764, for ten guineas, and Newbery was to have the option of a share in it. It is now setting to music by an eminent composer, and great expectations are formed of its success. One of the songs belonging to it has been already published in former editions of our little Poet’s works.†

“ But a word or two more about them; for perhaps you are unacquainted with a metrical production of his on the death of the Princess Dowager of Wales; it was spoken and sung at the celebrated public rooms of Mrs. Cornelys in Soho Square, and was afterwards printed.

“ Several other pieces of the Doctor’s are still in MSS. in the hands of various people. The late Mr. Wright the printer who had been apprenticed to or in the service of Mr. Hamilton at a time when Goldsmith composed numerous essays for magazines, articles for reviews, &c. preserved a list of these fugitive pieces which are now reprinting, and will make their appearance in the course of next winter. Goldsmith likewise began a periodical paper, which being unsuccessful was laid aside after a few numbers of it had been issued out.”‡

The design intimated here of having the Oratorio set to music had been previously and has been since contemplated by the possessors of the MS., though hitherto without being carried into effect. By a letter from the late Mr. Francis Newbery to Isaac Reed, to whose possession it was consigned by the late Mr. Nicol of Pall

* MS. correspondence in the possession of Mr. Mason.

† It has been already noticed that *two* songs had been printed from the Oratorio.

‡ From correspondence in the hands of Mr. Mason.

Mall, who received it from Dodsley, it appears that in consequence of a conversation with Mr. Nicol, he wished to borrow the MS., having appointed a meeting for that morning (the letter was written in the spring of 1787) to submit it to the opinion of Mr. Steevens the composer. Nothing seems to have resulted from this project, and its success therefore remains to be tried; the MS. was returned to the custody of Mr. Reed.

Connected with its history there is a further coincidence deserving notice. On the 12th of April, 1764, about a week after the performance of Smart's piece which is supposed to have in part excited the desire of Goldsmith to pursue the same path, an Oratorio named "Israel in Babylon," was advertised to be performed at the Opera House for the benefit of decayed musicians and their families, the music to be selected from Handel. The same announcement mentioned the piece being then for sale by Griffin of Fetter Lane, and other booksellers. By a memorandum in the possession of the writer, it appears that early in the following month (May) Goldsmith drew a bill upon Griffin for thirteen guineas, although no previous connexion seems to have existed between them, and no trace of literary services performed for that publisher at that time has been found which might entitle him to such an accommodation. The similarity of subject between "Israel in Babylon" and the Oratorio of the Poet; the period of their production; the connexion with Griffin; and the sum drawn for, circumstances which may be wholly accidental, seem nevertheless to point to some connexion between the performances.

During the summer we trace him to the same house at Islington as before, in another account of his hostess still extant; to this is added the bill of his laundress, the whole being summed up by the charge of three months' board, viz. 12*l.* 10*s.*; and as Newbery had to pay the amount, the signature of the Poet at the bottom of the page on the left hand, forms a voucher for the accuracy of the items. Such things are not without interest as exhibiting the private habits of men who have delighted us by their talents. It is therefore subjoined.*

* "1764.		Dr. Goldsmith Dr. to Eliz. Fleming.			
To the rent of the room from Dec. 25. to March 29.		-	-	-	£1 17 6
April 2.	A post letter	-	-	-	0 0 1
3.	The stage coach to London	-	-	-	0 0 6
7.	Lent to pay the laundress	-	-	-	0 1 0
11.	A post letter	-	-	-	0 0 1
15.	A parcel by the coach	-	-	-	0 0 2
18.	A post letter	-	-	-	0 0 1
19.	Sassafras	-	-	-	0 0 6
25.	Sassafras	-	-	-	0 0 6
May 2.	Sassafras	-	-	-	0 0 6
3.	A post letter	-	-	-	0 0 1
7.	A post letter	-	-	-	0 0 1
	Sassafras	-	-	-	0 0 6
	Gave the boy for carrying the parcel to Pall Mall				0 0 8
Carried forward					£2 1 3

By another memorandum in the tailor's (Mr. William Filby) account book, it appears he was still at Islington in September, where however he did not continue long. Whether the removal thence was occasioned by his arrest or threatened arrest which took place about this time by the landlady, as told by Dr. Johnson and repeated so variously by others, or whether this event occurred subsequently in London, and of course in a different lodging, is doubtful; probably the latter; for it is not likely that having been an inmate so long, and with Newbery as responsible paymaster, she had recourse to the last resort of a severe creditor even if payment had been for a time delayed.

Mrs. Piozzi, Sir John Hawkins, Cumberland, and Boswell, all tell the story, and although professing to receive it from the same source, namely from Dr. Johnson, all differently.

Goldsmith, according to Boswell, having been arrested by his landlady for arrears of rent, and being at a loss how to extricate himself, sent a message to Johnson in the morning before he was up stating his distress, and begging to see him. The latter in order to obviate immediate difficulty, sent back a guinea by the messenger, and when dressed proceeded to his friend, whom he found violently incensed at the conduct of the mistress of the house, but with a bottle of madeira before him as a means of drowning his cares. This the visitor put

		Brought forward					£2	1	3
May 12.	Sassafras	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	6
16.	A post letter	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	4
17.	Pens and paper	-	-	-	-	-	0	1	3
21.	Sassafras	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	6
23.	A post letter	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	1
24.	Lent in cash	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	10
	A pint of ale	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	2
25.	Paper	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	6
28.	Sassafras	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	6
	Opodeldock	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	2
June 8.	A letter to the post	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	1
9.	Lent in cash	-	-	-	-	-	0	1	2
	Sassafras	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	6
21.	Lent in cash	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	6
27.	A post letter	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	1
28.	A post letter	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	1
30.	Sassafras	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	6
	To cleaning shoes	-	-	-	-	-	0	2	6
Washing and Mending.									
April 17.	3 Shirts, 3 neckcloths, 4 pair stockings	-	-	-	-	-	0	1	5½
May 3.	2 Shirts, 2 neckcloths, 1 cap	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	9½
12.	4 Shirts, 4 neckcloths, 3 pair stockings	-	-	-	-	-	0	1	9
	To mending 3 pair stockings	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	3
May 26.	3 Shirts, 3 neckcloths, 1 pair stockings,	-	-	-	-	-	0	1	2½
June 8.	4 Shirts, 4 neckcloths, 1 pair stockings, 1 cap	-	-	-	-	-	0	1	7½
	1 Pair stockings, mending	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	1
22.	4 Shirts, 4 neckcloths, 4 pair stockings	-	-	-	-	-	0	1	10
	3 Pair stockings, mending	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	3
	For cloth and wristing a shirt	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	6
	To 3 months' board from March 29. to June 29.	-	-	-	-	-	12	10	0
							<hr/> £15 12 3		

to one side, begged him to be calm, and inquired what means he possessed of escaping from the difficulty; a novel was produced stated to be ready for the press; Johnson discovering its merits, carried the work to a bookseller (Newbery) who gave sixty pounds for the copy, and returning with the money or a portion of it, the debtor discharged the demand, not without expostulating with his hostess in a high tone for using him so ill.

Mrs. Piozzi says that Johnson was called from her house after dinner and found the Poet getting drunk upon madeira; that on the money being received for his book, he invited the woman of the house to drink punch and pass their time in merriment; circumstances at variance with his usual habits which were temperate, and the indignation he would naturally feel on the occasion, and therefore requiring some corroborating authority to believe.

Sir John Hawkins tells us "that for the clamours of a woman to whom he was indebted for lodging and for bailiffs that waited to arrest him, he was equally unable till he had made himself drunk, to stay within doors or to go abroad to hawk among the booksellers a piece of his writing, the title whereof my author does not remember. In this distress he sent for Johnson, who immediately went to one of them and brought back money for his relief."

Cumberland taxes his invention still higher. The landlady, by his account, had made the staggering proposal to her lodger of either *marrying her* or paying the debt; that Johnson found him meditating this alternative; that he carried the novel to *Dodsley* and received *ten* pounds for it; and prudently doled that sum out to him by a guinea at a time.

Nothing exhibits more the loose manner in which such anecdotes are received or told than these various versions of the same occurrence. The statement of Boswell is simple and probable, taken from the mouth of Johnson when deliberately questioned on the subject, and therefore as nearly as possible we may believe exact. Mrs. Piozzi errs from carelessness, and perhaps from the desire of bringing her dinner table before the notice of the reader, as it is obvious from reference to minute circumstances that the summons of Johnson to the prisoner must have occurred in the forenoon. Hawkins colours the matter in stating he wished to get drunk, according to his peculiar ill humour, or the inaccuracy of his informant, who it appears did not even know the name of the work the sale of which procured the release of the author. Cumberland's story seems wholly a fiction, or confounded with that of some other person, for none of the details agree with those of others or with fact, as we know that the sum received for the novel was sixty pounds, and that the purchaser was Newbery, not Dodsley; he knew nothing personally of Goldsmith for about eight or nine years afterwards; and the proposal of marriage seems doubly improbable from the hostess being said to be elderly, while to arrest the object of her passion seemed of all others the least dexterous mode of urging her suit.

The precise period at which this occurred is uncertain, neither of the narrators having recorded dates; Mrs. Piozzi says 1765 or 1766,

but this vague account partakes of the loose inaccuracy of her anecdote. Dr. Johnson who being personally concerned could not so well commit mistake, expressly says it preceded the publication of the "Traveller," and assigns that as a reason why less money was obtained for the copy than it would otherwise have been worth. He further relates that the bookseller thought so indifferently of his bargain as to keep it by him unprinted nearly two years after the purchase. These circumstances fix it beyond doubt in the year 1764. If it were previous to April, on the second of which month it will be seen the lodging bill just given commences, the time between the sale and the publication would be exactly two years; if in the autumn it would be necessarily less; and as he was at the latter period with Mrs. Fleming, we may acquit her of the indignity inflicted upon her lodger, and infer that he was at temporary apartments in London; the probable date of the occurrence was therefore February or March 1764.

From several small sums of money received from Newbery about this period, he was doubtless engaged in the minor business of a professional author, such as revising short translations, and supplying papers for the "Christian's Magazine;" devoting such moments as he could spare to objects of a more imperishable character. To escape from the task-work of trade to the indulgence of the imagination, is one of the luxuries which an indigent man of genius enjoys with a zest unknown to his richer brethren who by happier circumstances are enabled to command their own time and subject; and all who can appreciate the struggles of poverty with aspirations after excellence and reputation, will give him their sympathy. A large undertaking, the completion of the poem of "The Traveller," had been for some time before him; and this if successful, promised the gratification of his highest ambition.

It will be remembered that this work was commenced by his own account in Switzerland, whence a portion of it, the *disjecta membra* only we may believe, was transmitted to his brother in Ireland. For a time, the continued contest he had to sustain against want by such productions as were more profitable in the literary market precluded serious attention to it, but as he became more at ease, such additions were made as his plan or genius suggested; the original outline, said by his contemporaries to have been more extensive than now appears, was contracted and filled up; and in this state though still imperfect and without the title (that of "The Philosophical Wanderer" was first suggested) being positively fixed,* it was submitted to Dr. Johnson. He saw its merit at once; recommended it to be retouched and finished for publication, and towards the conclusion, voluntarily added a few lines of his own. The advice, though not immediately followed, was not forgotten. A poem is one of those hazardous adventures in literature in which failure seems the rule and success the exception; we cannot therefore be surprised at his hesitation to

* According to Dr. M'Veagh M'Donnell, who had his information from Mr. Thomas English.

publish, or the desire to give it all the benefit that time and care could impart; fully aware of the risk of turning his venture adrift on the ocean of public opinion, the precaution he adopted displayed prudence; for who would not, if he could, acquire the reputation not of a tolerable, but of a good poet?

The state of poetry at this period was such that a fair opening appeared to offer to a new claimant for its honours. The great masters who had charmed the preceding age had passed away, and none of equal powers had arisen to take their place. Young was advanced in life and expired a few months afterwards; Gray was indolent and fastidious; and excepting in a few of his pieces, several of the wits and critics, among whom Johnson even at this time was one, declared against him. Mason and Glover were scarcely popular. Johnson himself was silent. Churchill had just expired; one of those poets who though of such reputation among his contemporaries as to be termed in a memoir written in the preceding year "the greatest English poet now living, or perhaps that this country ever produced," is now if not forgotten at least neglected, his works rarely perused for the pleasure they afford, and even his genius indifferently estimated. Lloyd died nearly on the day of the publication of the new poem, but his reputation was not great. Falconer who had printed the Shipwreck two years before, was scarcely yet enrolled among the body of poets. Akenside, Armstrong, Smollett, Grainger, and Bonnell Thornton, all members of the medical profession, were otherwise occupied; and to this respectable list of five of the "two-fold disciples of Apollo," a term not unfelicitously applied to the former, was now to be added a sixth in the person of Goldsmith.

In sitting down to the composition of his poem, as well as in his general views of poetry, he had his eye fixed on the most popular models of the preceding age, which having undergone the test of time and given pleasure to every description of reader, he thought might be safely followed as the best. So likewise thought Dr. Johnson. Public opinion sided with both; and public opinion, as Aristotle, and Cicero, and many others have told us, is after a moderate time for deliberation, rarely mistaken in matters of taste. The opinions of Goldsmith on the art as well as his practice, are on record. In the *Life of Parnell* we find; "He appears to me to be the last of that great school that had modelled itself upon the ancients, and taught English poetry to resemble what the generality of mankind have allowed to excel. A studious and correct observer of antiquity, he set himself to consider nature with the lights it lent him; and he found that the more aid he borrowed from the one, the more delightfully he resembled the other. To copy nature is a task the most bungling workman is able to execute; to select such parts as contribute to delight, is reserved only for those whom accident has blessed with uncommon talents, or such as have read the ancients with indefatigable industry. Parnell is ever happy in the selection of his images and scrupulously careful in the choice of his subjects. His productions bear no resemblance to those tawdry things which it has been for some time the fashion to admire; in writing which

the poet sits down without any plan, and heaps up splendid images without any selection; where the reader grows dizzy with praise and admiration, and yet soon grows weary he can scarcely tell why. * * * * * It is indeed amazing, after what has been done by Dryden, Addison, and Pope, to improve and harmonize our native tongue, that their successors should have taken so much pains to involve it into pristine barbarity. These misguided innovators have not been content with restoring antiquated words and phrases, but have indulged themselves in the most licentious transpositions and the harshest constructions, vainly imagining, that the more their writings are unlike prose, the more they resemble poetry. They have adopted a language of their own and call upon mankind for admiration. All those who do not understand them are silent, and those who make out their meaning are willing to praise, to show they understand. From these follies and affectations the poems of Parnell are free; he has considered the language of poetry as the language of life, and conveys the warmest thoughts in the simplest expression."

Here, at a time when his judgment was matured, we find laid down the principles which in practice he so successfully carried into effect, and which form the great secret of his popularity. We see an utter rejection of all affectation; the use of the language of life which is not necessarily either vulgar or prosaic; and combined with these a warmth and simplicity that although constituting the chief charm of good writing, frequently passes unobserved by inattentive readers, because it wants show and glitter, has nothing to strike forcibly or take by surprise, and where the perfection of art is exhibited in leaving behind no trace of the labours employed by the writer. Upon principle therefore he carefully abstained from pursuing the path, or participating in what were considered the faults, of Gray; faults of ambition, perhaps a lawful ambition; faults certainly nearly akin to beauties, were not the labour used by the artist too obvious to escape the notice of the reader. To him, to Mason, Warton, and their imitators, his remarks were considered to apply, and they did not pass without notice and censure. With Gray more particularly, he was then and since brought into competition, and the honest expression of his poetical taste has been attributed to the passion of envy. But there seems no just cause for such imputation. On the contrary he had a high opinion of that poet, but occasionally felt bound to withhold the meed of applause less from his genius than from the manner in which it was exerted. Nor was this a recent opinion, advanced when his own poems differing so much in character had received nearly universal approbation and when a degree of rivalry might be supposed to influence his decision, but at the earliest period of his literary career, long before he was known, before he had any reputation to lose by comparison, and before he knew or could be influenced by the critical opinions of Johnson. Of this we have sufficient proof. When engaged in 1757 in the *Monthly Review*, he wrote the criticism in that journal on the *Bard and Progress of Poetry*; and there as an anonymous reviewer, had there existed

hostile feelings to gratify they might have been safely indulged, even with the countenance of a large body of literary men who were less disposed then than subsequently, to admit the merits of Gray.* But we find the same spirit in this notice as in the remarks in 1770; he objects to their elaborate character, to their approval being confined to a few, to their obscurities and abruptnesses, and emphatically advises him to aim at being more popular, or in other words to study the people. A complimentary notice of the Odes is thus introduced; nor will even warm admirers of the lyric bard deny that there is not much truth in the criticism:

"As this publication seems designed for those who have formed their taste by the models of antiquity, the generality of readers cannot be supposed adequate judges of its merits; nor will the poet it is presumed, be greatly disappointed if he finds them backward in commending a performance not exactly suited to their apprehensions. We cannot however without some regret behold those talents so capable of giving pleasure to all, exerted in efforts that at best can amuse only the few; we cannot behold this rising poet seeking fame among the learned, without hinting to him the same advice that Isocrates used to give his scholars, *study the people*. This study it is that has conducted the great masters of antiquity up to immortality. Pindar himself, of whom our modern lyrist is an imitator, appears entirely guided by it."†

* * * * *

"It is by no means our design to detract from the merit of our author's present attempt; we would only intimate that an English poet—one whom the muse has *marked for her own*‡—could produce a more luxuriant bloom of flowers by cultivating such as are natives of the soil than by endeavouring to force the exotics of another climate; or to speak without a metaphor, such a genius as Mr. Gray might give greater pleasure and acquire a larger portion of fame, if, instead of being an imitator, he did justice to his talents and ventured to be more an original. These two odes, it must be confessed, breathe much of the spirit of Pindar, but then they have caught the seeming obscurity, the sudden transition, and hazardous epithet, of his mighty master."§

Of the inattention paid to the literary history of Goldsmith we have proof in the erroneous dates assigned to nearly all his principal pieces, and this poem among the number. Bishop Percy, Malone in a note to Boswell's Johnson, and all the memoir writers give the date 1765, though the publication took place in the middle of December 1764, the error arising no doubt from 1765 being printed in the

* The ridicule attempted to be cast upon him by Colman and other wits of the day in "Odes to Obscurity and Oblivion" will not be forgotten by the literary reader.

† Mr. Southey, in his *Life of Cowper*, quotes this passage: he was not aware, and indeed the fact is now for the first time disclosed, that Goldsmith was the writer.

‡ In italics in the Review.

§ Monthly Review, September, 1757. See Works, vol. iv.

title-page, the commencement of that year being at hand. The first announcement appears in the Public Advertiser, the 19th of that month; in the St. James's Chronicle on the 21st; and was repeated in others: it came out in the quarto form, and was the first production to which he put his name—"This day is published, price one shilling and sixpence: The Traveller; or a Prospect of Society, a poem. By Oliver Goldsmith, M. B. Printed for J. Newbery in St. Paul's Church Yard."

A feeling worthy of all praise produced the dedication to his brother. Careless of any interests of his own which might be promoted by conciliating the powerful or the wealthy, it was intended not merely as a return of respect and attention for the kindness shown to his earlier years, but to bring into notice and perhaps preferment should the work become popular, a worthy though friendless clergyman. Allusions to the motive took place in conversation with his friends, and afterwards found its way into the newspapers; in a paragraph in imitation of a paper of Swift, where among other instances of men who have acted nobly, or as it is phrased, made great figures in the world, is the following—"Dr. Goldsmith, when he dedicated his beautiful Poem the Traveller to a man of no greater income than forty pounds a year."

The plan of the poem is in great measure new, though it is possible that Addison's Letter from Italy suggested the idea. Travels in prose had been often told; but to array them for the first time in the garb of poetry, promised something of stronger interest to the reader, while the situation in which the Traveller was projected and commenced, entitles its author in all probability to the honours of originality. But it is in the execution of such things we must seek for the merit that gives them popular favour; to do this well requires poetical powers of a high order, good taste, a philosophical spirit of observation, and that nice discrimination which seizes only upon such points as mark national peculiarities in the strongest manner, and are immediately intelligible to the general reader. It is so far different from what is called *local* poetry, such as Denham's Cooper's Hill, which may have given the hint to Addison, that it overlooks in great degree the scenery of countries to fix upon and describe the moral characteristics of the people. Human nature is always difficult to pourtray in poetry with condensation and accuracy; but he who accomplishes this, is beyond question no ordinary poet.

We have proof at once of the judgment of Goldsmith, and of the plan being adapted to poetry of the highest order, in Lord Byron pursuing it in Childe Harold, which in all its leading points may be considered a kind of "Traveller" on a more extended scale. We find a similar survey of the people and countries through which they pass; the same attention to their distinguishing moral features; the same philosophical spirit of reflection, varying indeed with the opposite natures of the writers; many noble sentiments, and ideas of great moral sublimity, mingled with what is still more peculiar, the same reference to personal circumstances, feelings and recollections; both identifying themselves in a peculiar manner with their

subject. Lord Byron, however, by amplifying the design, has gained a stronger hold upon the reader. Goldsmith looks down as from a height upon the countries under his eye, with the large and general views of a philosopher whose business is not with detail. Lord Byron travels more extensively and tells his travels with more of the minuteness of a tourist; he is more various and diversified, yet scarcely more vigorous, and certainly not more condensed: both are ethical; and both indulge freely in their respective political views. In Goldsmith we find not one objectionable sentiment, nothing that assaults or pains the religious or moral feelings of the reader; the same cannot be said of the author of *Childe Harold*. The main purpose of the former is to show that by the benevolent ordination of Providence, the sum of human happiness is in most countries, however varying in natural position, capabilities, or form of government, nearly the same; that content belongs to the mind and disposition of the individual, more than to the circumstances by which he is surrounded. Lord Byron, who had probably set out with no fixed plan in view, is willing to tell of all that interested him; not of moral characteristics only, but of manners, localities, and the associations derived from historical events; he therefore perhaps carries with him general readers more. The one is general in his philosophy, the other more local and particular. If Lord Byron be the more various and interesting, we find in Goldsmith purity of thought and that high moral feeling pervading all his writings, the want of which is so often to be lamented in those of his noble successor; while in vigour and sublimity whenever occasion requires it, he is rarely inferior.

True poets probably differ little in their conception of what should be good subjects for the exercise of their art, as Thomson, by another coincidence, appears to have thought well of the design which Goldsmith lived to execute. His opinion, contained in a letter to Bubb Doddington, written from Paris in 1730, when on the tour of Europe with Mr. Talbot, was not made known till long after the death of the Irish poet:

“Your observation I find every day juster and juster, that one may profit more abroad by seeing than by hearing; and yet there are scarce any travellers to be met with who have given a landscape of the countries through which they have travelled, *that have seen, as you express it, with the Muses’ eye*; though that is the first thing which strikes me, and what all readers and travellers in the first place demand. *It seems to me that such a poetical landscape of countries, mixed with moral observations on their countries and people, would not be an ill-judged undertaking.* But then the description of the different face of nature in different countries, must be particularly marked and characteristic; the portrait painting of nature.”

So well do we find the idea thrown out in this passage fulfilled, that nothing appears in the Traveller but what is appropriate and distinct, or as the author of the Seasons says, marked and characteristic; the terms applied to one country or people cannot well be

transferred to another; and it admits of doubt which of the nations, whether Italians, Swiss, French, Dutch or English, is most happily drawn. By Dr. Johnson the latter seems to have been most prized; he was known often to repeat with a fervour of animation which brought tears into his own eyes, that noble passage, one of the most powerful and yet accurate in modern poetry, which gives so high and not undue picture of our countrymen:—

“Stern o’er each bosom reason holds her state
With daring aims irregularly great;
Pride in their port, defiance in their eye,
I see the lords of human kind pass by;
Intent on high designs, a thoughtful band;
By forms unfashion’d fresh from nature’s hand,
Fierce in their native hardness of soul,
True to imagin’d right, above controul;
While e’en the peasant boasts these rights to scan,
And learn to venerate himself as man.”

A comparison between his description of Italy and that of Addison occurs immediately to the poetical reader; and if the same thought was suggested to himself, no tone of depreciation or jealousy appears to have been the result. The “Letter from Italy” is thus fairly and judiciously characterised a few years afterwards in one of his compilations for youth, the “*Beauties of English Poesy* :—“ Few poems have done more honour to English genius than this. There is in it a strain of political thinking that was, at that time, new in our poetry. Had the harmony of this been equal to Pope’s versification, it would be incontestibly the finest poem in our language; but there is a dryness in the numbers which greatly lessens the pleasure excited both by the poet’s judgment and imagination.”

To follow a good poet in the most admired of his pieces without losing ground by the attempt, forms no slight test of the merit of a writer; and Addison is so popular, that even his name becomes nearly a bar to competition. All the stronger points admitting of poetical description had been seized by him; the features of the country, her mountains, views, groves, and fields, none of which, as he says, were “unsung” had been appropriated; the diversity of her productions, where—

“Blossoms, and fruits, and flowers together rise,
And the whole year in gay confusion lies,”

had been adverted to; and her ruins, as well as her triumphs in painting and sculpture, sufficiently brought into views to take away much of the charm of originality from any who should venture to tread the same ground.

Little therefore remained for the muse of Goldsmith but the character of the people, which like their modern literature and institutions, obtained no respect from his judgment and consequently little from his pen. Their predilections and pursuits as being supposed to tend to moral degeneracy, lead to a severe remark—

“And sensual bliss is all this nation knows.”

And again, in allusion to their fallen political condition he adds, in contrast to the natural products of the country—

“Man seems the only growth that dwindles here.”

And carrying on the unfavorable picture, the following lines have great force and condensation—

“Contrasted faults through all his manners reign,
Though poor, luxurious; though submissive, vain;
Though grave, yet trifling; zealous, yet untrue,
And even in penance planning sins anew.”

Addison dwelt little on what Goldsmith has been compelled by the pre-occupation of topics to make his principal theme. In comparing the one hundred and sixty-eight lines of the former with the sixty of the latter, they will be found as the range of the former was unlimited, to display more imagination and vivacity. In Goldsmith as his purpose was more philosophical, we find more of the depth of such an observer, equal vigour of description, more condensation of thought, and infinitely more smoothness of versification. Both unaccountably neglect to notice the chief delight of modern Italy, its music; for this in the hands of either, particularly of Goldsmith who had a taste for it, might have been made the vehicle of some fine poetical painting and pointed remark. But his ingenuity deserves praise in furnishing a sketch after such a master, at once philosophical, spirited, and original.

While engaged in putting a finishing hand to the poem, an anecdote connected with the writing of one of the couplets and of his amusement at the same moment, told by Sir Joshua Reynolds to a lady more than once alluded to who forms the authority for the fact, exhibits the peculiarity of his humour; it shows also that elevated sentiments are not always the offspring of abstract thought.

Either Reynolds, or a mutual friend who immediately communicated the story to him, calling at the lodgings of the Poet opened the door without ceremony, and discovered him not in meditation, or in the throes of poetic birth, but in the boyish office of teaching a favourite dog to sit upright upon its haunches, or as is commonly said, to beg. Occasionally he glanced his eye over his desk, and occasionally shook his finger at the unwilling pupil in order to make him retain his position; while on the page before him was written that couplet with the ink of the second line still wet, from the description of Italy—

“By sports like these are all their cares beguiled,
The sports of children satisfy the child.”

The sentiment seemed so appropriate to the employment, that the visiter could not refrain from giving vent to his surprise in a strain of banter, which was received with characteristic good humour, and the admission at once made that the amusement in which he had been engaged had given birth to the idea.

The interval between the period of a publication issuing from the

press, and the moment when the public favour towards it seems no longer doubtful, is necessarily an anxious one for an author. To Goldsmith, notwithstanding some affected indifference expressed in the dedication, it could not be an unimportant matter; it was the first production to which he had put his name, as well as the greatest adventure in which he had hitherto embarked; and the stake was to him not merely reputation, but in some measure subsistence. Dr. Johnson, who knew the anxious feelings of his friend, made an immediate effort to relive them by a recommendatory notice which appears in the *Critical Review* for December 1764.

Offices of this kind proceeding from kind intentions need not necessarily be laudatory; they are often more in the nature of advertisements to announce existence than to disseminate praise, and prove frequently useful to works of admitted merit. It is not that the public cannot unassisted discover and reward such productions without a director to guide its taste, but in the multiplicity of publications, some which are good may for a while escape observation; and it is thus that the early notice of a judicious friend may do quickly for its fame what would otherwise be a work of time. This obviously was the idea of the great critic whom it may be interesting to trace in his friendly endeavours; he says indeed little, leaving his poem to speak for itself in the quotations, which amount to a fourth part of its number of lines. It was evidently written in haste: the remarks are of the utmost possible brevity, and not being included in some editions of the works of its writer although enumerated by Boswell among his productions, will be found in a future volume.

The *Gentleman's Magazine* of the same month pronounces a favourable opinion on its merits. In January, the *Monthly Review* in the way of amends for previous treatment of their old associate, followed in the track of Johnson in the *Critical*:—"For the *Traveler* is one of those delightful poems that allure by the beauty of their scenery, a refined elegance of sentiment, and a correspondent happiness of expression." The assertion of the author in the dedication, of not being solicitous to know what would be its reception, is condemned as affectation; and if meant in a general sense, would be so: but the words seems to imply that he cares not how it shall be received by the lovers of personal satire, poetry, and blank verse. With less reason, exception is taken by the reviewer to the expression "*untraveller heart*," which yet drags at each remove "*a lengthening chain*," in the opening paragraph, as involving a contradiction. The objection is more apparent than real, for by the common licence of poetry it merely conveys the idea of the heart being unchanged, however removed by distance from the object of regard.

To the suffrage of the reviews and other journals, was added that of all private judges of good poetry; until at length, when the author had been removed by death beyond the reach of partiality or the flattery of friends, it was pronounced "*without one bad line—without one of Dryden's careless verses*." When Sir Joshua Reynolds observed that he was glad to hear Charles Fox say it was

one of the finest poems in the English Language, and Mr. Langton replied, "Surely there was no doubt of this before," Johnson's remark was "No; the merit of the Traveller is so well established, that Mr. Fox's praise cannot augment it, nor his censure diminish it." Another remark of the same authority, in reply to an observation of Reynolds, that in giving it such a character his friends might be deemed partial, deserves notice, as furnishing a proof of the fact so obvious in Boswell, Sir John Hawkins, and others, of the writer when alive, not having justice done to his actual powers and attainments by the major part of his associates. "Nay, sir, the partiality of his friends was always against him. It was with difficulty we could give him a hearing."

The force of this remark is explained by the belief entertained by more than one of their mutual acquaintance, that to Johnson, not to the actual author, was the credit of many fine passages of the poem due. This we have long known had not the slightest foundation in truth. It is certain indeed he revised it; but who on such an occasion would not, and does not, take the advice of a judicious critic whenever it is to be procured? Such emendations are rarely of moment, and rather do credit to his caution than detract from his genius or skill. In the revisal, it is true, Johnson introduced some lines of his own as substitutes for others deemed less pointed or explicit in the position attempted to be maintained; he marked them for Boswell in 1783; they are nine in number, being the 420th,

"To stop too fearful, and too faint to go,"

and eight lines of the conclusion:—

"How small of all that human hearts endure,
That part which kings or laws can cause or cure.
Still to ourselves in every place consign'd,
Our own felicity we make or find;
With secret course which no loud storms annoy,
Glides the smooth current of domestic joy;
* * * * *
To men remote from power but rarely known,
Leave reason, faith, and conscience all our own."

These, though vigorous and expressive, simply re-state the general doctrine urged in the poem, and present no material novelty of sentiment; few of those of Goldsmith will lose by comparison; and in fact much of the beauty of the passage would be impaired, were it not for the force of the illustration introduced by the author himself in the two lines which precede the concluding couplet—

"The lifted axe, the agonizing wheel,
Luke's iron crown, and Damien's bed of steel."

One of which allusions, that to the "Iron Crown," occasioned some difficulty to readers, until it was recollected that in a rebellion in Hungary in 1514, headed by two brothers named Zack, George and Luke, the former, not the latter, was punished on its suppression by having his head encircled with a red-hot iron crown. The short

and obscure nature of the reference probably occasioned the Poet some trouble; to name the actual sufferer, George, might have been misconstrued by those who knew not the historical fact as implying some sneer or irreverence to his own sovereign, while it is certain the surname of "Zack" which would have suited his purpose in sense and sound was forgotten; the substitution of the latter for Luke would render the line historically correct.

A gratuitous supposition of Boswell, that much, "*no doubt*," of the sentiment and expression in this poem were derived by Goldsmith from conversation with Johnson, would deserve no remark, were it not indicative of that unfairness of which he is too often guilty. "The Traveller," observes Mr. Croker* in noticing the remark, "is a poem which in a peculiar degree seems written from the personal observation and feelings of its author;" and no critic of even moderate skill but will arrive at the same conclusion. There is a reality in all the leading passages which cannot be mistaken for second-hand portraiture,—a view of localities and characteristics, of feelings and opinions arising from actual contemplation of the places and people described, that no other than an eyewitness, and that witness a philosophical observer, could convey to the reader. Johnson never was in Switzerland, Italy, or Holland; and only in France long after the publication of the poem; he was therefore incapable of lending aid to its most forcible and characteristic passages.

Nothing can be more unjust or ungenerous than to attempt in this way to claim for one man of genius, who never dreamt of arrogating such distinction himself, the merit that is due to another, merely because they happened to be friends and associates. Were this practice to be encouraged, literary society must soon become extinct; no man of talents will associate with his fellow, for none will run the risk of having the laurels which ought to encircle his own head, capriciously wrested from him to adorn that of another. If Johnson furnished sentiment or expression to the Traveller, he may equally be said to have supplied them to the Deserted Village, to the Hermit, to the Vicar of Wakefield, and to She Stoops to Conquer; and if he is thus to be considered a storehouse of mind to one friend, why not to another? Why not from the same association, have supplied Burke with his oratory, Reynolds with his Discourses (which is in fact more than hinted by some,) Beauclerk with his wit, Dyer with his learning, Malone with his criticism, and Hawkins with his ill-nature? Such accusations against the fair fame of authors, though frequently made, are in very few instances just. Johnson indeed, when younger in his literary career, became alarmed at the thought of similar imputations being thrown out against his originality, and to prevent them, took the resolution of avoiding the society of such as he thought likely to advance the accusation.† The remedy was desperate, and too unsocial to be always followed.

* Ed. of Boswell's Johnson, 1831, vol. ii. p. 6.

† "I used to go," said the moralist, "pretty often to Campbell's [Dr. John, author of the Lives of the Admirals and a variety of other works] on a Sunday evening, till I began to consider that the shoals of Scotchmen, who flocked about

The perseverance of Boswell on another occasion in almost forcing him to assume a portion of the merits of his friends, is as amusing as the simplicity with which it is avowed:—"He (Johnson) owned," says Boswell, "that he thought Hawkesworth was one of his imitators, but he did not think Goldsmith was. Goldsmith, he said, had great merit." A disclaimer, at once so liberal and just, would not suit the purpose of his admiring biographer; he therefore would make him assume the merit of bestowing at least his patronage upon the Irish poet, if not of imparting to him his sentiments and language. "But, sir," continued Boswell, "he is much indebted to you for his getting so high in the public estimation." *Johnson*. "Why, sir, he has perhaps got *sooner* to it by his intimacy with me."

An anecdote connected with this poem exhibiting that absence of mind and facility of temper in its author which occasionally led him to make admissions he did not really mean, and which were thence sometimes turned against himself, was told by Dr. Johnson. "I remember," said he, "Chamier, after talking with him some time, said, 'Well, I do believe he wrote this poem himself; and let me tell you, that is believing a great deal.' Chamier once asked him what he meant by *slow*, the last word in the first line of the Traveller,

'Remote, unfriended, melancholy, slow.'

Did he mean tardiness of locomotion? Goldsmith who would say something without consideration answered 'Yes.' I was sitting by and said, 'No sir, you did not mean tardiness of locomotion; you mean that sluggishness of mind which comes upon a man in solitude.' Chamier believed then that I had written the line, as much as if he had seen me write it." The Poet, however, was not the first of his calling who so imperfectly understood himself as to require a friend to interpret his meaning. Pope it is well known was confounded by the interpretation put upon passages in his *Essay on Man*, and not only expressed the greatest obligations to Warburton but as is said became the founder of his fortune, for becoming his commentator and explaining sentiments which were either misapprehended or he could not so well explain himself.

"What a useful study," says Spence in his *Anecdotes*, speaking of Pope, "might it be for a poet to compare in those parts what was written first with the successive alterations; to learn his terms and arts in versification; and to consider the reasons why such and such an alteration was made." Every reader of taste feels something of a similar interest in tracing a popular poem in its progress to excellence; and in the instance of the Traveller it seems to be more necessary as no notice has hitherto been taken of the variations, though considerable.

The number of lines in the first edition was 416; in the last, being the ninth printed during the life of the author, 438; making an addi-

him might probably say, when any thing of mine was well done, 'Ay, ay, he has learnt this of Cawmell.'

tion of twenty-two to the original number; but as fourteen of the first edition were thrown out, the total number of new lines amounted to thirty-six.

Such as may be strictly called additions, from conveying thoughts or illustrations not in the first edition, are the following:—

“With food as well the peasant is supply’d
On Idra’s cliffs, as Arno’s shelvy side.

* * * *

“Where wealth and freedom reign contentment fails,
And honour sinks where commerce long prevails.

* * * *

“While nought remain’d of all that riches gave,
But towns unmann’d, and lords without a slave.

* * * *

“The self-dependent lordlings stand alone,
All claims that bind and sweeten life unknown.”

And that animated apostrophe to freedom, of sixteen lines, commencing with

“And thou, fair Freedom, taught alike to feel
The rabble’s rage, and tyrant’s angry steel :

and ending with

“Except when fast approaching danger warms.”

Those deemed less fit by the author to retain their station in the poem, and therefore finally rejected, were

“’Twere affectation all, and school-taught pride,
To spurn the splendid things by heaven supply’d :”

for which he substituted

“Say, should the philosophic mind disdain
That good which makes each humbler bosom vain ?”

For the following passage which was thrown out—

“And yet, perhaps, if states with states we scan,
Or estimate their bliss on reason’s plan,
Though patriots flatter and though fools contend,
We still shall find uncertainty suspend ;
Find that each good, by art or nature given,
To these or those, but make the balance even ;
Find that the bliss of all is much the same,
And patriotic boasting reason’s shame :”

now appear six lines, commencing

“And yet, perhaps, if countries we compare,”

and ending with

“To different nations make their blessings even.”

Immediately succeeding the lines where by the anecdote previously related the Poet seemed to bestow divided attention between his

verses and his dog, and which glance at the political apathy of Italy, a couplet, now omitted, continued the idea.

“At sports like these while foreign arms advance,
In passive ease they leave the world to chance.”

After the lines

“Yet think not thus when Freedom’s ills I state,
I mean to flatter kings or court the great,”

came

“Perish the wish; for inly satisfy’d,
Above their pomps I hold my ragged pride:”

which were replaced in the amended edition by

“Ye powers of truth that bid my soul aspire,
Far from my bosom drive the low desire,” &c.

Among a variety of verbal alterations a few of the chief as indicating his care in the revision, may be noticed:—

“A weary waste expanding to the skies,”

stood originally

“*expanded* to the skies.”

“Blest be those feasts with simple plenty crown’d,”

was

“*where mirth and peace abound.*”

“Amidst the store should thankless pride repine,”

was

“*’twere thankless to repine.*”

“Boldly proclaims that happiest spot his own,”

was

“*Boldly asserts that country for his own.*”

“And though the rocky crested summits frown,”

was

“*rough rocks or gloomy summits frown.*”

In the description of Italy, the lines

“Till more unsteady than the southern gale,
Commerce on other shores display’d her sail.”

stood thus,

“*But more unsteady than the southern gale,
Soon Commerce turn’d on other shores her sail.*”

Again,

“Yet still the loss of wealth is here supplied,
By arts, the splendid wrecks of former pride,”

is changed from

“*Yet though to fortune lost, here still abide
Some splendid arts, the wrecks of former pride.*”

And
 was written
 Speaking of Holland—
 was
 replaces
 was
 Of England, as we are told,
 stood
 Of America,
 stood
 “Each nobler aim repress by long controul,”
 “*When struggling virtue sinks by long controul,*”
 “Industrious habits in each bosom reign,”
 “*breast obtain.*”
 “Here by the bonds of nature feebly held;”
 “*See, though by circling deeps together held.*”
 “Nor this the worst: as nature’s ties decay,”
 “as *social bonds* decay.”

Of England, as we are told,
 stood
 Of America,
 stood
 “Where kings have toiled and poets wrote for fame,”
 “*And monarchs toil, and poets pant for fame.*”
 “And the brown Indian marks with murd’rous aim,”
 “*takes a deadly aim.*”

There are but two instances of the transposition of lines; one in the description of Holland, where in allusion to her embankments to keep off the inroads of the sea, the lines

“Onward methinks and diligently slow,
 The firm connected bulwark seems to grow,”

immediately follow the couplet which they are now made to precede.

The second is in the noble and animated sketch of our countrymen so much admired and repeated by every good judge of poetry and so great a favourite with Dr. Johnson. In the first edition it is—

“Stern o’er each bosom Reason holds her state:
 With daring aims irregularly great,
 I see the lords of human kind pass by,
 Pride in their port, defiance in their eye:”—

which on further consideration is more judiciously arranged—

“Pride in their port, defiance in their eye,
 I see the lords of human kind pass by.”

In a few passages, thoughts are repeated which particularly pleased him in prose, and were thought capable of strong poetic

painting or expression, their previous use being probably forgotten. Thus the beautiful and affecting image—

“And drags at each remove a lengthening chain,”

had been employed in the third letter of the citizen of the world:—

“The farther I travel, I feel the pain of separation with stronger force; those ties that bind me to my native country and you are still unbroken. By every remove I only drag a greater length of chain.”

And the lines—

“Each wanton judge new penal statutes draw
Laws grind the poor, and rich men rule the law,”

correspond with a passage in the *Vicar of Wakefield*:—

“What they may then expect, may be seen by turning our eyes to Holland, Genoa, or Venice, where the laws govern the poor and the rich govern the law.”

And again the simile—

“—like the circle bounding earth and skies,
Allures from far, yet as I follow, flies,”

appears likewise in the novel:—

“And though death, the only friend of the wretched, for a little while mocks the weary traveller with the view, and like his horizon still flies before him,” &c.

Again in speaking of the Dutch—

“Heavens! how unlike their Belgic sires of old,
Rough, poor, content, ungovernably bold;
War in each breast and freedom on each brow.”

In the manuscript introduction to the *History of the War*, he concludes a passage on the supposed degeneracy of that people arising from their commercial habits and inattention to warlike deeds in the same strain:—

“How unlike the brave peasants, their ancestors, who spread terror into either India, and always declared themselves the allies of those who drew the sword in defence of freedom!”

On another occasion in speaking of land gained from the sea, he repeats in prose what had been said in the poem, regarding Holland:—

“To men of other minds my fancy flies,
Embosom’d in the deep where Holland lies.

* * * * *

“Whilst the pent ocean rising o’er the pile,
Sees an amphibious world beneath him smile.”

“But we need scarce mention these, when we find that the whole kingdom of Holland seems to be a conquest from the sea, and in a manner rescued from its bosom. The surface of the earth in this country is below the level of the bed of the sea; and I remember, upon approaching the coast, to have looked down upon it from the sea, as into a valley.”

The obligations of the Poet either in matter or manner to his predecessors, appear to be few. No one seems to have written more

immediately from himself, or to own less obligation to classical sources. His train of thought, as well as the mode of expressing his thoughts, which is natural and easy without straining after the condensed terseness of Pope* or the bold extravagance of Dryden, seem to be unborrowed. Neither do we find many of those coincidences which not unfrequently slide into poetry unconsciously on the part of the author, and sometimes indeed when pluming himself upon originality, yet are afterwards found in some previous writer. There are however two lines for which he must not be permitted to receive credit, although no doubt considered at the moment of composition to be purely his own.

In the second paragraph of the poem it is said—

“—— press the bashful stranger to his food,
And learn *the luxury of doing good.*”

Garth, in his poem on Claremont, speaking of the Druids, has preceded him both in sentiment and expression—

“Hard was their lodging, homely was their food,
For all *their luxury was doing good.*”

In the succeeding passage, alluding to his wanderings, we find—

“My fortune leads to traverse realms alone,
And *find no spot of all the world my own.*”

Prior, in lines written in Robe's Geography, says—

“My destin'd miles I shall have gone,
By Thames or Maese, by Po or Rhone,
And *found no foot of earth my own.*”

Accidental as such resemblances commonly are, it is to be regretted that they appear at all; to a man of undoubted original powers they were not worth the borrowing if intentionally taken; for on all such occasions the gain is small and temporary, the odium consequent upon discovery great and enduring. Imperfect recollections no doubt often float in the mind as original ideas, and deceive him by whom they are used; but one of the best apologies for Goldsmith on this occasion is, that they passed undetected by the critical eye and ear of Johnson, who revised the poem in manuscript, reviewed it in print, and read it aloud on more than one occasion to his friends. What therefore escaped him in the cooler moments of critical examination, may well have past unobserved by the author in the ardour of composition.

Poetical coincidences indeed are usually dealt with very hardly by the critics, who willing as well to exalt the importance of their calling as to exhibit individual sagacity, fasten upon them like officers

* Of the condensation shown in some of the lines, Mr. Campbell quotes an instance:—

“There is perhaps no couplet in English rhyme more perspicuously condensed than those two lines of the ‘Traveller,’ in which he describes the once flattering, vain, and happy character of the French—

‘They please, are pleas’d, they give to get esteem,
Till seeming blest, they grow to what they seem.’”

of justice upon thieves caught in the act of purloining, and treat the supposed offenders with little less mercy. Undue importance is attached to very trifling matters in this way; what may be a casual resemblance, or perhaps to the writer himself an original thought, is often magnified by the severity of his judges into wilful theft or imitation. Yet looking at the vast number of poetical pieces, many upon the same or similar subjects, the real matter for wonder is that there are so few; and nothing perhaps can give us a higher idea of the art itself, or the infinite diversity of the human mind, than to trace the variety and ingenuity which appear in such productions. Poets certainly borrow much less than is usually supposed, for it can seldom be an object to a man of genius to do so. To appropriate even a happy expression, or a line, much less to seize upon a train of thought that belongs to one of his predecessors, is hazardous to his fame; the obligation is sure to be detected, and deprivation of his borrowed honours is not only the consequence, but a serious shock may be given to the credit he otherwise possesses for originality. No writer with even a moderate share of pride, but would sooner furnish a tolerable line himself than borrow a good one from another. And there is scarcely any man of fair talents who has accidentally fallen into such resemblances, that would not have been obliged to any critical friend for pointing out and expunging what never can be an advantage to retain. Justice therefore requires we should judge such things with more liberality than is commonly done. Let us not be alarmed at the prospect of seeming to open a wider door to the depredations of writers who possess little delicacy, or little genius; to prevent such a result it is at least proper they should be noticed; and where the writer is really seen to possess native powers, we may on the disputed point, divest him of originality, yet not stigmatise him as a plagiarist.

It is different when we find a train of thought obviously followed, for wherever this occurs imitation may be more reasonably suspected; but this is seen rather among the younger than with the veteran order of poets; and proceeds less from the desire to borrow, than the admiration produced in an inexperienced mind by forcible passages in a favourite writer. Thus for example some of the ideas of Goldsmith in the poem under consideration occupied the mind of Kirk White in writing Clifton Grove, where however unintentionally meant, we find resemblance in sentiment and even in language. The passage in the Traveller concluding with—

“For me your tributary stores combine,
Creation’s heir, the world, the world, is mine!”

is closely followed in—

“Happy is he who, though the cup of bliss
Has ever shunned him when he thought to kiss;
Who still in abject poverty and pain,
Can court with pleasure what small joys remain;
Though were his sight convey’d from zone to zone,
He would not find one spot of ground his own;

*Yet as he looks around he cries with glee,
 'These bounding prospects all were made for me;
 For me yon waving fields their burdens bear,
 For me yon labourer guides the shining share,'* &c.

The opening and other portions of the same poem show that the youthful author had parts of the *Deserted Village* in his eye. Yet such imitations, as they are not meant to deceive, deserve no serious critical reprehension, but should be viewed as the involuntary homage of a young imagination to the merits of a distinguished predecessor in the art.

"Dear native grove! where'er my devious track,
 To thee will memory lead the wanderer back.
 Whether in Arno's polish'd vales I stray,
 Or where Oswego's swamps obstruct the way,
 Or wander lone, where wildering and wide,
 The tumbling torrent laves St. Gothard's side;
 Or by old Tejo's classic margent muse,
 Or stand entranc'd with Pyrenean views;
 Still, still to thee, where'er my footsteps roam,
 My heart shall point and lead the wanderer home."

Notwithstanding the suffrage of reviews, magazines, newspapers and private friends, to the merits of the *Traveller*, several admirers of the poem complained that it did not make way more rapidly in public favour; having in view, perhaps, the instantaneous popularity acquired not long before by the satires of Churchill. Allusions were even made to the neglect of the public, in a criticism said to be written by Bonnel Thornton, who as a friend of Churchill, while he reprehends Goldsmith for an obvious reference to that writer, gives, amid a variety of extracts, great praise to his production. "The beauties of this poem," he says, "are so great and various that we cannot but be surprised that they have not been able to recommend it to more general notice. The pictures of the several countries visited by the *Traveller* are warmly imagined and highly finished."* Verses, as well as criticism, were not wanting in praise of the new candidate for poetical fame; of these the following "Lines on perusing the traveller," may serve as a specimen rather of the zeal of the admirer than the skill of the writer in this line of composition:—

"Ye friends of verse, who much afflicted sigh'd,
 Deplo'ring genius dead when Churchill died;
 Your fancied grief, your needless fears give o'er,
 And let dejection urge your tears no more;

* *St. James's Chronicle*, Feb. 7—9. 1765; then a favourite vehicle for literary criticism, and to which most of the wits of the day contributed. The passage alluding to Churchill, and another given in the preceding page, will give an idea of the extraordinary estimation in which his writings were held at this period. "The latter part of this paragraph (in the dedication of the *Traveller*) we cannot help considering as a reflection on the memory of the late Mr. Churchill whose talents as a poet were so greatly and so deservedly admired, that during his short reign, his merit in great measure eclipsed that of others; and we think it no mean acknowledgment of the excellencies of this poem to say that, like the stars, they appear the more brilliant now that *the sun of our poetry is gone down*."

Since happier Goldsmith's every faultless page,
 Scorning the transient fame of party rage,
 On being read, must make e'en envy sigh,
 Compell'd to own, though anxious to deny,
 That genius still surviving marks his name,
 To grace the honoured list of deathless fame." *

In the "Race," a poem published some time afterward by Cuthbert Shaw, under the name of "Mercurious Spur," in which the chief poets of the day are made in the language of one of his lines, to

"Prove by their heels the prowess of their head;"

and where Churchill and Murphy are the heroes, he is just alluded to among others as being likely to exhibit in the lists on a future occasion—

"But, lo! a crowd upon the plain appear,
 With Descaizeau slow-pacing in the rear!
 Mason and Thomson, Ogilvy and Hayes,
And he whose hand has pluck'd a sprig of bays
On Rhætia's barren hills."

A note appended to the latter part of the passage refers the reader to "The Traveller, a Poem."

One of the means adopted by the friendship of Johnson to make the new production known, was to read it in circles of his friends. An incident on one of these occasions evinces that turn for sarcasm which rarely spared friend or foe, and while honouring the poem, threw no little ridicule on the poet. Miss Reynolds, the sister of Sir Joshua, who tells the story in her Recollections,† was the occasion of it; and though not celebrated for beauty herself, evinced on more than one occasion a strong lady-like aversion to the homely face and peculiarities, though harmless ones, of her brother's friend.

"Of Goldsmith's Traveller he (Johnson) used to speak in terms of the highest commendation. A lady (Miss Reynolds herself) I remember who had the pleasure of hearing Dr. Johnson read it from the beginning to the end on its first coming out, to testify her admiration of it, exclaimed, 'I never more shall think Dr. Goldsmith ugly.' In having thought so however, she was by no means singular; an instance of which I am rather inclined to mention, because it involves a remarkable one of Dr. Johnson's ready wit: for this lady one evening being in a large party was called upon after supper for her toast, and seeming embarrassed, she was desired to give the ugliest man she knew; and she immediately mentioned Dr. Goldsmith; on which a lady (Mrs. Cholmondely) on the other side of the table rose up and reached across to shake hands with her, expressing some desire of being better acquainted with her, it being the first time they had met; on which Dr. Johnson said, 'Thus the ancients on the commencements of their friendships, used to sacrifice a beast betwixt them.'"

* Lloyd's Evening Post, Feb. 27. March 1, 1765.

† Quoted in Mr. Croker's Boswell.

All fears of its success entertained by impatient friends were dissipated by the demand for a second edition, which appeared on Thursday March 14th,* just three months after the first; a third soon followed; and in the middle of August† a fourth; a degree of approval calculated to gratify reasonable expectation. The newspapers sounded his fame; passages from his previous writings, the *Inquiry into Polite Learning*, the *Bee*, and *Citizen of the World*, were selected for republication; and the poem preserving a steady popularity from that time forward, reached a ninth edition during his life, being one annually; and this, at a period when the number of readers of poetry did not amount to a sixth of those of the present day. No evidence of success could be more gratifying, and amply repaid any anxieties that the first few weeks may have occasioned.

The sum received by the author, for a work so long popular and profitable to others, forms an object of curiosity, but as usual exhibits the inadequacy of literary reward; by the following account of the publisher it would appear to have been no more than twenty guineas; the same item however occurs in one or two other memorandums, and therefore it is to be hoped, though the fact is by no means certain, that he profited by successive editions.

“Settle Dr. Goldsmith’s account, and give him credit for the following copies:

1. The preface to the History of the World, and charge it to the Partners	}	-	£3	3	0
3 Prefaces to the Natural History	-	-	6	6	0
Translation of the Life of Christ	-	-	-	-	-
Ditto the Lives of the Fathers	-	-	-	-	-
Ditto the Lives of the Philosophers	-	-	-	-	-
Correcting 4 vols. Brookes’ Nat. History	-	-	-	-	-
79 Leaves of the History of England	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Copy of the Traveller, a Poem</i>	-	-	21	0	0
Lent in Fleet Street at Mr Adam’s to pay for the instrument	-	-	0	15	6
Lent him at the Society of Arts, and to pay arrears,	-	-	3	3	0
Get the copy of Essays for which paid	-	-	10	10	0
as half, and Mr. Griffin to have the other.”					

* * * * *

While these pages are passing through the press, the second volume of Mr. Southey’s *Life of Cowper* has appeared. Should any coincidence of thought in passages relating to the past or present opinion of Churchill, or on the state of poetry at that period appear to exist, it may be necessary to say that it is accidental, the MS. of this work having been in the hands of the publisher more than a year.

In enumerating the poets who immediately preceded or were contemporary with Cowper, it seems remarkable that this eminent writer never once mentions the name of Goldsmith; an omission on which misconstructions may arise.

“Another proof,” he says, “that the school of Pope was gradually losing its influence is, that almost every poem of any considerable

* London Chronicle.—St. James’s Chronicle.—Lloyd’s Evening Post.

† Ibid.

length which obtained any celebrity during the half century between Pope and Cowper, was written in blank verse. With the single exception of Falconer's *Shipwreck*, it would be in vain to look for any rhymed poem of that age and of equal extent, which is held in equal estimation with the works of Young, Thompson, Glover, Somerville, Dyer, Akenside, and Armstrong."—Vol. ii. p. 176.

And again—

"Cowper's *Task* appeared in the interval, when young minds were prepared to receive it, and at a juncture when there was no poet of any great ability, or distinguished name in the field. Gray and Akenside were dead. Mason was silent. Glover, brooding over his *Athenaid*, was regarded as belonging to an age that was past. Churchill was forgotten. Emily and Bampfylde had been cut off in the blossom of their youth. Crabbe having by the publication of his *Library*, his *Village*, and his *Newspaper*, accomplished his heart's immediate desire, sought at that time for no farther publicity; and Hayley ambled over the course without a competitor."—P. 181, 182.

The omission of the name of the author of the *Hermit*, the *Traveller*, and the *Deserted Village* in both these passages may be accidental; for it is difficult to conceive that so distinguished a professor of the art as he himself is, should intentionally seem to undervalue, by not noticing, such an author, even should his poems fall short of the "equal length" to which allusion is made. Certain theories of poetry have however almost produced a schism among the lovers, as well as among the professors of song, and the merits of a writer seem in danger of being forgotten in considering to what *school* he is supposed to belong. Yet after all, of what moment or of what use, is contention on this subject? Good poetry is of no sect or school. And provided it be *good*, the public care nothing whence it comes; whether Spenser, Milton, Dryden, or a more modern master, be the object of worship of the writer; whether it be couched in the stanza of the former; in the blank verse of Milton, of Young, or of Thompson; in the vigorous rhymes of Dryden; or in the terseness and music of Pope. All have their merits, and it would be strange if all had not, when the world has so long agreed in rendering them its tribute of admiration. It is however not the public but poets themselves who are chiefly guilty of injustice to each other. Thus Pope is said by Cowper in one of his letters, to be an indifferent poet; Lord Byron in turn calls Cowper no poet; and a great living master of the lyre is said to designate his lordship just in the same terms, *as no poet*. These opinions, or perversities of opinion, can mislead no one; they may be supposed to spring rather from temper than from judgment, for every reader of taste or discrimination will rise in opposition to the decision and direct his resentment against the accusers.

With great deference to the opinion of Mr. Southey, whose decisions cannot be often safely controverted, it may be doubted whether the influence of the school of Pope can be considered to have declined, simply because as he seems to imply, blank verse had been

employed by several writers of eminence. We may with equal reason infer that it was not their blank verse but their merits otherwise, that caused them to be esteemed; and had their poems been as well written in rhyme, whether of the school of Pope or of any other school, they would have acquired as great, perhaps greater popularity. Neither can the poets who are enumerated be considered so much the successors as the contemporaries of Pope. Young was born before him; Somerville two or three years after; Thompson and Dyer twelve years younger; Armstrong, Glover, and Akenside something later; and although several survived him, almost every one of the number had published their great works during his life. He can scarcely therefore be said to have established a school. There are strong reasons for believing that the poets in question afraid to follow in a track in which equal excellence was hopeless, struck out blank verse as being likely to lose less by the comparison.

Yet how few even of these, excepting the *Night Thoughts*, the *Seasons*, and (though less generally) the *Pleasures of Imagination*, are extensively read. Glover, Somerville, Dyer, and Armstrong are comparatively neglected. Without popularity what is a poet? He writes to be read or to what purpose does he write? It is in vain to contend as some resolutely attempt, against this criterion; the vanity of a neglected author may be soothed by sneering at or condemning what he cannot attain, but general approval must have its weight in literature as in every other pursuit in life; and when tested by the lapse of the whole or greater part of a century, we can rarely dispute the justice of the decree which awards poetical fame.

Let us contrast these poets and many others with Goldsmith, who wrote neither long poems, nor blank verse, and who moreover may be suspected of being in some measure influenced by the "school of Pope." He is read universally; by the old and the young, by the learned and the unlearned, and to all, as his themes are from nature and therefore not likely to tire or become antiquated, gives pleasure on repeated perusals. You meet with his productions in every variety of form and in almost every place, from the best furnished repository of books to the humblest book-stall, adapted to the wants or the means of every description of readers, nor can even Gray or any other modern writer with whom he has been compared dispute pre-eminence with him here. We cannot therefore fairly doubt his taste in the selection of his topics, or his genius in the execution of all that he attempted; but we may be permitted to doubt whether if he had written in blank verse, his poems would have pleased so generally as they have done.

CHAPTER XV.

Mr. Nugent.—Earl of Northumberland.—Rev. Thomas Percy.—Ballad of Edwin and Angelina, or “The Hermit.”—Essays.—Literary Labours for Newbery.—Attempts to Practise as Physician.

AMONG the friends drawn to him by the reputation of the Traveller, although the acquaintance has been said to be of earlier date, was Mr. Robert Nugent, afterwards Lord Nugent, Viscount Clare, and Earl Nugent. He was a younger son of Michael Nugent, descended from the Nugents of Carlanstown in the county of Westmeath, by a daughter of Lord Trimlestown, and being therefore from the county where the relatives of Goldsmith resided, some previous knowledge of the family, as well as a sense of his merits or similarity of tastes, probably led to the introduction.

With little more than the usual patrimony of a younger brother on his entrance into life, this gentleman had talents and good fortune enough to acquire nearly all that ambition could desire. He came first into parliament for St. Mawes in Cornwall, in 1741; was appointed Comptroller of the Prince of Wales's household in 1747; a Lord of the Treasury in 1754; one of the Vice-Treasurers of Ireland in 1759; a Lord of Trade in 1766; became soon after Baron Nugent, and Viscount Clare; and in 1776 was created Earl Nugent, with remainder to his son-in-law George Grenville, Marquis of Buckingham. He was thrice married, and by his second wife Anne, daughter and heiress of Secretary Craggs, celebrated as the friend of Addison and Pope, acquired a large fortune, which being increased from other sources, he is said on his death in 1788, to have left to his successors, in addition to large landed estates, above two hundred thousand pounds in money. Such success in worldly matters rarely awaits a votary of the muse; yet he was a poet, a man of wit and gallantry, and a facetious companion. A volume of his Odes and Epistles sent forth anonymously was published by Dodsley, and reached a second edition in 1739; several others are printed in the Collection of the same publisher, a few in the New Foundling Hospital for Wit, and an Epistle addressed to him by Dr. Dunkin appears in Swift's Works. But his poetry however approved at the time has not come down to us with claims to particular notice, for though not deficient in ease, it wants perhaps novelty of idea and vigour of expression. In the Beauties of English Poesy, Goldsmith has introduced one of his pieces, “An Epistle to a Lady,” which is not undeserving of the praise bestowed upon it by him in the prefatory notice:—“This little poem by Mr. Nugent, is very pleasing. The easiness of the poetry, and the justice of the thoughts, constitute its principal beauty.” Their acquaintance soon ripened into intimacy, the Poet becoming a welcome guest in his

house; first in the vicinity of town, and afterwards at Gosfield Hall in Essex, where an elegant table and good society were to be found whenever tempted by leisure or inclination to quit London. To him, when he became Lord Clare, was addressed the humorous piece, the *Haunch of Venison*.*

By Mr. Nugent he is believed to have been first made known to the Earl of Northumberland, then in London but holding the office of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, as a man of genius belonging to that country and deserving of his patronage. Willing to attend to the recommendation, the Earl invited him to an interview, of which a ludicrous story has long been told as the result. Mistaking by this account, the groom of the chambers for his Lordship, he addressed him in a set speech prepared for his master, who entering the room before the confusion occasioned by the error had been recovered, the Poet having lost his presence of mind, stammered out indistinct answers to the inquiries of his Excellency, and the meeting ended unsatisfactorily to both. Had this blunder really occurred, it could

* Horace Walpole who seems to have viewed few of his contemporaries with a favourable eye, speaks as slightly of him; he thus writes to Sir Horace Mann, 24th December, 1741.

"You know or have heard of Mrs. Nugent, Newsham's mother; she went the other morning to Lord Chesterfield to beg 'he would encourage Mr. Nugent to speak in the house, for that really he was so bashful, she was afraid his abilities would be lost to the world.' I don't know who *has* encouraged him, but so it is, that this modest Irish converted Catholic does talk a prodigious deal of nonsense in behalf of English liberty."

A few days afterwards, 7th January, in allusion to such as had wit, he writes (in mockery):—

"Then Mr. Nugent has had a great deal of wit till within this week; but he is so busy and so witty, that even his own party grow tired of him. His plump wife, who talks of nothing else, says he entertained her all the way on the road with repeating his speeches."

Again, May 20, 1742:—

"The great Mr. Nugent has been unfortunate too in Parliament; besides very ill luck, from being a very indifferent speaker: the other day on the place-bill (which, by the way, we have now modelled and softened, and to which the Lords have submitted to agree to humour Pultney,) he rose and said—'he would not vote, as he was not determined in his opinion; but he would offer his sentiments; which, were particularly, that the Bishops had been the cause of this bill being thrown out before.' Winington called him to order, desiring he would be tender of the Church of England. You know he was a papist. In answer to the beginning of his speech Velters Cornwall who is of the same side, said, 'he wondered that when that gentleman could not convince himself by his eloquence, he should expect to convince the majority.'"

July 22d, 1744, in allusion to Nugent's marriages,—“Lord Middlesex is going to be married to Miss Boyle, Lady Shannon's daughter; she has thirty thousand pounds, and may have as much more, if her mother who is a plump widow don't happen to *Nugentize*."

To his name in the first of these quotations Lord Dover appends a note:

"Robert Nugent, a poet, a patriot, an author, a Lord of the Treasury, and finally an Irish peer by the titles of Lord Clare and Earl Nugent. He seems to have passed his long life in seeking lucrative places, and courting rich widows, in both of which pursuits he was eminently successful."

It may be observed that having commenced life poor, and a Roman Catholic, he acquired wealth, titles, and offices of honour and trust as a Protestant; and at the conclusion of his career, returned to his original (the Romish) faith, and also brought up his only daughter in it.

scarcely transpired except through himself, and it is not probable he gave currency to what must have made him a subject of ridicule. If mistake, even in part, took place, the consequences, however diffident he may have been, could scarcely have deprived him so wholly of self-confidence as is said; and the Earl was too much a man of the world not to make allowance for the embarrassment, had there been such, of a visitor of whose merits he was aware and whose wants he sought to know. But the account appears wholly a fabrication taken, like another adventure that requires likewise to be mentioned, from his own writings of an earlier date than the supposed occurrence. The origin of the story seems to be in the Vicar of Wakefield, where George Primrose describes his visit to the house of a nobleman:—

“During this anxious interval I had full time to look round me. Every thing was grand and of happy contrivance; the paintings, the furniture, the gildings, petrified me with awe, and raised my idea of the owner. Ah, thought I to myself, how very great must the possessor of all these things be, who carries in his head the business of the state, and whose house displays half the wealth of a kingdom: sure his genius must be unfathomable! During these awful reflections, I heard a step come heavily forward. Ah, this is the great man himself! No, it was only a chambermaid. Another foot was heard soon after. This must be he! No; it was only the great man’s valet de chambre. At last his lordship actually made his appearance. Are you, cried he, the bearer of this here letter? I answered with a bow. I learn by this, continued he, as how that——But just at that instant the servant delivered him a card, and without taking farther notice, he went out of the room and left me to digest my own happiness at leisure.”

The real circumstances attending the interview we learn from Sir John Hawkins; his testimony admits of no doubt, being partly a witness on the occasion, while his prejudices acting rather against than in favour of Goldsmith, we have a guarantee if his account required any, that nothing which impeached the Poet’s good sense or knowledge of the world is concealed.

“Having one day,” says Sir John, “a call to make on the late Duke, then Earl, of Northumberland, I found Goldsmith waiting for an audience in an outer room: I asked him what had brought him there; he told me an invitation from his lordship. I made my business as short as I could, and as a reason mentioned that Dr. Goldsmith was waiting without. The Earl asked me whether I was acquainted with him; I told him I was, adding what I thought likely to recommend him. I retired, and staid in the outer room to take him home. Upon his coming out I asked him the result of his conversation—‘His lordship,’ says he, ‘told me he had read my poem (meaning the *Traveller*) and was much delighted with it; that he was going to be Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and that hearing I was a native of that country, he should be glad to do me any kindness.’—‘And what did you answer,’ asked I, ‘to this gracious offer?’ ‘Why,’ said he, ‘I could say nothing but that I had a brother there, a clergy-

man, who stood in need of help: as for myself I have no dependence on the promises of great men: I look to the booksellers for support; they are my best friends, and I am not inclined to forsake them for others.' Thus did this idiot in the affairs of the world, trifle with his fortunes, and put back the hand that was held out to assist him! Other offers of a like kind he either rejected or failed to improve, contenting himself with the patronage of one nobleman, whose mansion afforded him the delights of a splendid table, and a retreat for a few days from the metropolis."

The harshness of these remarks is characteristic of Sir John's usual manner. Goldsmith, however he may have erred as a man of the world in attempting to divert the stream of official bounty from himself towards his brother, exhibits a disinterestedness and affection which every warm and benevolent mind will estimate as it deserves. Unfortunately his aim did not succeed, perhaps from the Earl not proceeding to Ireland as was anticipated, and the result may point a new proverb in selfishness, or strengthen an old one in proving, that the most effectual way of assisting our friends is first to assist ourselves. In this instance it might have been literally fulfilled, for had a small appointment, or pension, been assigned him sufficient to ward off the pressure of absolute want—and it is much to be regretted that nothing of this kind was ever done—the fruits of it might have been given to his brother in case he could not otherwise have succeeded in providing for him. But no doubt exists, of which we shall hereafter find proof, that a sturdy spirit of independence influenced him in part, from an erroneous idea perhaps that political services might be expected from his pen.

The Earl at a future period in conversation with Dr. Percy respecting him, said, that had he been informed at the time of the desire of Goldsmith to travel into Asia for the purposes contemplated, he would have taken care to furnish him with sufficient means by a salary on the Irish establishment; and in doing so, should have felt he was merely fulfilling a duty to that country in patronising its enterprise and genius.

The other story told of him in connexion with this of the Earl of Northumberland, is meant to support the general belief exaggerated probably or untrue, of his being frequently duped by impositions. A bailiff, according to the tale, having been frequently foiled in attempting to arrest our author, at length hit upon the device of writing a letter to him in the assumed character of a nobleman's steward, requesting a meeting at a certain coffee-house previous to a formal introduction to the peer, who charmed with the merit of his poem, desired the pleasure of a personal acquaintance. Goldsmith is represented to have been entrapped into this snare; and further, that he was released from its unpleasant consequences by the friendship of Mr. Archibald Hamilton, the printer.

Rigid examination into circumstances impairs or destroys the effect of many amusing anecdotes, and this, when closely scrutinised, proves no better founded than many others. Instead of being the subject of such a stratagem, he had himself five years previously,

invented and applied it to the supposed circumstances of an unlucky author pursued by creditors, who is made to narrate the story in a club of brother authors in the following manner; and in this likewise we find another allusion to a "set introductory speech" prepared for an imaginary nobleman. Thus the humour and ingenuity exerted for the amusement of his readers, were without even the merit of invention in the incidents, borrowed by the retailers of anecdotes from his own writings, and applied to his own conduct.

" 'A nobleman,' cries a member (of the supposed club) who had hitherto been silent, 'is created as much for the confusion of us authors as the catch-pole. I'll tell you a story, gentlemen, which is as true as this pipe is made of clay. When I was delivered of my first book, I owed my tailor for a suit of clothes, and hearing that my book took very well he sent for his money and insisted upon being paid immediately; though I was at that time rich in fame, for my book run like wild-fire, yet I was very short in money, and being unable to satisfy his demand, prudently resolved to keep my chamber, preferring a prison of my own choosing at home to one of my tailor's choosing abroad. In vain the bailiffs used all their arts to decoy me from my citadel; in vain they sent to let me know that a gentleman wanted to speak with me; in vain they came with an urgent message from my aunt in the country: in vain I was told that a particular friend was at the point of death, and desired to take his last farewell; I was deaf, insensible, rock, adamant; the bailiffs could make no impression on my hard heart, for I effectually kept my liberty by never stirring out of my room.

" 'This was very well for a fortnight; when one morning I received a most splendid message from the Earl of Doomsday, importing that he had read my book and was in raptures with every line of it: he impatiently longed to see the author, and had some designs which might turn out greatly to my advantage. I paused upon the contents of this message, and found there could be no deceit, for the card was gilt at the edges, and the bearer I was told had all the looks of a gentleman. Witness ye powers how my heart triumphed at my own importance; I saw a long prospective of felicity before me, I applauded the taste of the times which never saw genius forsaken; *I had prepared a set introductory speech for the occasion*, five glaring compliments for his lordship, and two more modest for myself.

" 'The next morning therefore in order to be punctual to my appointment, I took coach, and ordered the fellow to drive to the street and house mentioned in his lordship's address. I had the precaution to pull up the window as I went along to keep off the busy part of mankind, and big with expectation, fancied the coach never went fast enough. At length however the wished-for moment of its stopping arrived; this for some time I impatiently expected, and letting down the window in a transport in order to take a previous view of his lordship's magnificent palace and situation, I found, poison to my sight! I found myself not in an elegant street, but a paltry lane, not at a nobleman's door, but at the door of a spunging house; I found

the coachman had all this while been just driving me to jail, and I saw the bailiff with a devil's face coming out to secure me.'”*

Notwithstanding the seeming indifference to Lord Northumberland's offer of assistance, his intercourse with that noble family did not cease. The Countess who possessed a cultivated taste, was a distinguished patroness of literary merit, and poetry particularly found in her a judicious admirer. Christopher Smart had already invoked his muse in celebration of the house of Percy, and in common with other men of genius, experienced her bounty; while the publication of the *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* in February 1765, drew her attention not only to a new and interesting branch of the subject, but to the ingenious editor, who thenceforward had the good fortune to enjoy as much from his literary deserts as his name, the patronage of that noble house.

The Rev. Thomas Percy, it has been mentioned, was introduced to Goldsmith by Grainger in 1758 or 1759 during an occasional visit from his rectory of Easton Mauduit, Northamptonshire, to London. He had been previously known to Dr. Johnson, Shenstone, Reynolds and other men already of eminence, or on the high road to attain it, and during a long life mingled either personally or by correspondence with the literary circles of the metropolis more extensively perhaps than any of his contemporaries. At an early period he evinced that strong love of letters which furnishes presumptive evidence of an ingenuous mind, and which though it may lead to no distinction, gives its possessor a favourable place in the estimation of the liberal classes of society. In the country, in addition to his proper duties, and as one of the most honourable means of aiding in the support of a young family, he devoted himself to literary pursuits.† These were of a varied character;—being projected editions of the Earl of Surrey's, and Villiers, Duke of Buckingham's Poems; the *Spectator* and *Guardian*, with notes; *Hau Kiou Choan*, a Chinese romance; five pieces of Runic Poetry, translated from the Icelandic; the *Song of Solomon*, newly translated from the Hebrew; a *Key to the New Testament*—and his chief and well known work in three volumes, octavo, the *Reliques* already mentioned, a curious and valuable publication, which rescued from obscurity or utter oblivion, a variety of pieces honourable to the ancient poetical genius of our country. He produced likewise the “*Northumberland Household Book*,” and a translation of “*Mallet's Northern Antiquities*,” he was the author of the “*Hermit of Warkworth*,” of the popular song of “*O Nanny wilt thou gang with me*,” and of several detached pieces

* Citizen of the World.—Letter xxx. See Works, vol. ii.

† By Dr. Percy's receipts now before the writer it appears he received for the *Reliques of Ancient Poetry*, March 25, 1763, (this must have been previous to publication) one hundred guineas; for *Hau Kiou Choan*, June 10, 1761, fifty pounds; for *Chinese Proverbs, Poetry, &c.*, June 10, 1761, ten guineas; for the new version of *Solomon's Song*, June 10, 1761, ten guineas; for *Runic Poetry*, March 25, 1763, ten guineas, being the first payment.—The subsequent editions of the *Reliques* were more profitable. In March 1775, he received forty pounds for permitting five hundred copies to be printed, in addition to one thousand previously agreed for, of the third edition.

of poetry, two of which in addition to a Latin poem, appear in the *Grand Magazine* for 1758.

The ingenuity and learning shown in his various pieces, added to his personal merits, caused him to be made chaplain to Lord Northumberland; in 1769 he was nominated to the same office in ordinary to his Majesty; in 1778 to the Deanery of Carlisle; and in 1782 to the Bishoprick of Dromore in Ireland.

The mitre which made him rich, did not make him idle; for much of the attention hitherto bestowed upon literature, was now devoted to the necessary but unostentatious duties of his diocese. Here, from a feeling of duty he fixed his constant residence, visiting England only occasionally. Ireland, in addition to many other disadvantages, was then thought by no means desirable as a place of abode, from the want of that systematic arrangement in matters of public convenience and internal detail which supply to civilized life some of its chief wants and many of its pleasures. Thus he complains in a letter to Malone (October 17th, 1786) of the negligence of an important public department—"I received only three days ago your very obliging favour of September 28th; nor did your former shorter letter which you mention, ever come to hand; a misfortune which I fear often happens to letters to and from me; for our post-office here is not well conducted." And again (July 13th, 1802) "Having reason to believe by some strange irregularity in the post-office that both letters to and from me have miscarried, I begin to suspect that you never received mine of June 18th." Another serious deprivation to a literary man, the effect of imperfect facility of communication, is thus mentioned to the same correspondent (July 3d, 1785)—"I am leaving Dublin to return for the summer to Dromore, where in a very agreeable situation in all other respects, I only have to regret my great distance from the literary world. I see new publications about as soon as they would reach the East Indies. Although I endeavour to get the *Reviews*, *Magazines*, &c. &c., I am often eight months in arrear. But I am endeavouring to open a communication through Liverpool and Newry for a supply of these necessary publications, and if I can accomplish it, will beg leave to inform you of the mode, &c.; for I find it often as difficult to get parcels sent me from Dublin as from London itself. Thus circumstanced I must feel double gratitude for a letter full of literary intelligence like your last."*

Notwithstanding these and other annoyances, inseparable from a less advanced state of social organisation, he did not find his abode in the sister kingdom so irksome a task as many seem to consider it, who deriving their wealth and honours from that country, decline to make it their residence. As an ecclesiastic, he justly considered himself imperatively bound to the spot where his charge was placed, and whence his income was derived. He thus fulfilled the truest duties of such an important station in a temporal as well as

* From MS. letters to Mr. Malone politely communicated by Dr. H. U. Thomson.

spiritual sense; became an example to his neighbourhood, and an ornament to his church. He assisted and instructed the poor of whatever faith, and gained all the respect which such conduct deserves; he was hospitable in his habits; warm, frequently irritable in temper; full of anecdote; and became so impressed towards the decline of life, with the necessity of appropriating every disposable moment to the duties of his calling, as to deem the time devoted to the work on which alone his fame rests, although executed when young, misapplied. When solicited by several correspondents of literary eminence, to prepare a new edition of the *Reliques** for the press about the year 1800, he peremptorily declined; assigning his sacred calling as utterly incompatible with such an undertaking. The care of it was therefore consigned to a relative.

To find a friend in a worthy man, is some testimony to the merit of him who makes the acquisition; and nothing of more moment than occasional differences of opinion on literary matters, sometimes sufficiently vehement, occurred to interrupt their regard. Goldsmith confessed to have profited by his learning and friendship; and Mr. Percy had too much discernment not to value one whose qualities as a man, and ingenuity and judgment as a writer, had won the esteem of the great literary names of the day.

Willing perhaps to profit by such suggestions as the taste of Goldsmith might throw out, it appears that portions of the *Reliques* were submitted to him previous to publication, and these by their simplicity and truth ensured his sincere applause. Admiration of the style produced one of its frequent effects, imitation; for to this and to the desire of gratifying the taste of the Countess of Northumberland, we owe the "*Hérmit*," the most beautiful ballad in our own, or perhaps in any language.

The minute history of such things being always interesting, it may be mentioned that it was written in 1764; and for the pleasure

* Upon this work it appears Sir Walter Scott formed his ballad taste. The following passage in a letter from Dr. Anderson, Editor of the *British Poets*, to Bishop Percy will interest the reader; it is dated 21st June, 1800.

"Knowing that your Lordship was to embark for England soon after the date of your letter to me, I intended to offer you my early congratulations on the happiness of being reunited to your family in Northamptonshire, after a long period of separation, anxiety and alarm, imperiously exacted by the high considerations of public duty. I communicated my intention to an ingenious friend here, who wished to avail himself of the opportunity, to submit to your Lordship's inspection one or two of his compositions in the style of the ancient Scottish Ballad; in testimony of his high respect for your character, and of his gratitude to the Editor of '*the Reliques*.' upon which he formed his taste for ballad thinking and expression. He happened soon after to go into the country, where he has been detained till now; when he does himself the honour he intended, by transmitting two ballads '*The Eve of St. John*' and '*Glenfinlass*' for your Lordship's opinion, and desires me to offer you the testimony of his sincerest esteem and veneration. The name of my friend is Walter Scott, Esq. a native of Tiviotdale, of the Harden family, an Advocate, Sheriff of Selkirkshire. He is the translator of Burger's '*Leonore*' and '*Earl Walter*,' and Goethe's '*Goetz*,' and will soon appear as Editor of a collection of *Border Ballads*, to be entitled '*The Minstrelsy of the Border*,' in one vol. printing at Kelso, upon the plan of the '*Reliques*,' which will be followed by two vols. of '*Illustrations of Border History, Poetry, and Popular Antiquities*.'" *MS. Correspondence in possession of Mr. Mason.*

of perusing it in print rather than in manuscript by the lady who was the immediate cause of its production, a few copies were printed off in the octodecimo form, which are now rarely met with, or even known, among the collectors of scarce tracts in poetry. None is to be found, as a communication on this subject from his Grace the Duke of Northumberland intimates, in the Library of Sion House, nor is it in any of the public libraries of London. A copy however has been procured after a tedious search by the writer of these pages, which belonged to the industrious Isaac Reed,* to whose name, and the date of the year when it appears to have been obtained, 1773, is added the following memorandum—"Of this ballad, which is different from the copy printed in Goldsmith's works, a few copies only were printed." The name also differs from that by which it is now known, as appears in the heading or title: "Edwin and Angelina. A Ballad. By Mr. Goldsmith. Printed for the amusement of the Countess of Northumberland."

In this, which forms the original poem, the number of stanzas is forty-one; when reprinted in the *Vicar of Wakefield* these were reduced to thirty nine; to which some years afterward he added another, or wrote one at least with that view, which was presented in manuscript to Richard Archdal, Esq. of Ireland, and now stands the thirtieth in the ballad; it renders the numbers of stanzas forty, and is beautiful in itself, though being merely descriptive it does not tend to advance the action of the poem.

"And when beside me in the dale,
He carol'd lays of love,
His breath lent fragrance to the gale,
And music to the grove."

The stanzas of *Edwin and Angelina*, for which no substitutes are provided in the *Hermit*, are the last two; the conclusion of the poem as it now stands, being considered by him more complete without than with their aid—

"No never from this hour to part,
We'll live and love so true,
The sigh that rends thy constant heart,
Shall break thy Edwin's too."

Those however which are omitted, possess too much merit, as well as from being fragments of Goldsmith, to be lost to the reader of taste:—

"Here amidst sylvan bowers we'll rove,
From lawn to woodland stray,
Blest as the songsters of the grove,
And innocent as they.

"To all that want, and all that wail,
Our pity shall be given,

* Purchased in the sale of the library of the late Richard Heber, Esq., who had, however, previously lent it for the use of this Work.

And when this life of love shall fail,
We'll love again in heaven."

Three other stanzas in the body of the tale, part of the self-accusation of Angelina, are replaced by others which he deemed better, but as of none would be willingly deprived, they are these:—

"When'er he spoke amidst the train,
How would my heart attend;
And still delighted ev'n to pain,
How sigh for such a friend!

"And when a little rest I sought
In sleep's refreshing arms,
How have I mended what he taught,
And lent him fancied charms.

"Yet still (and wo betide the hour)
I spurn'd him from my side,
And still with ill-dissembled power
Repaid his love with pride."

Even the opening lines are varied, for instead of the present—

"Turn, gentle hermit of the dale,
And guide my lonely way
To where yon taper cheers the vale,
With hospitable ray—"

we find when first printed—

"Deign saint-like tenant of the dale
To guide my nightly way
To yonder fire that cheers the vale
With hospitable ray:"

alterations obviously for the better; but for the satisfaction of the reader the whole of the original poem will be given in the Works. It may be remarked likewise that in addition to its improvements when introduced into the first edition of the *Vicar of Wakefield*, a few, though less important alterations chiefly verbal, occur between that and the copy as it now stands; so that much care was devoted to its polish and correctness. These things are not unworthy of notice; we are so rarely admitted into the laboratory of genius to see all, or nearly all the extent and variety of her operations, that whenever a glimpse however slight, can be obtained, we seize the opportunity with avidity.

A charge had been advanced against him of transferring to his ballad without acknowledgment, the following thought of Young,

"Man wants but little, nor that little long,"

which in the ballad runs—

"Man wants but little here below
Nor wants that little long."

The accusation happens to be satisfactorily disproved by finding in the original copy the passage given with inverted commas, in the usual manner of quotations; and the subsequent change appears to have arisen from the whole of the dialogue between the Hermit and the Wanderer being when reprinted, marked in a similar manner, which was not at first the case. The omission therefore of a third comma, a fault much more likely to proceed from the printer than the writer, forms the only ground for the imputation.

When the popularity of the Vicar of Wakefield gave the Hermit extensive circulation, (for the copy addressed to Lady Northumberland seems to have been unknown to the public) its originality and merit were both assailed. Error or envy is so quick to detect supposed faults, or to take from one writer in order to appropriate to another, that a man of genius is not always permitted to retain without a struggle the credit of what is nevertheless his own. In the *St. James's Chronicle*, then a favourite journal of criticism for several chief writers of the day, July 18—21, 1767 appeared the following letter:—

“To the Printer of the St. James's Chronicle.

“SIR,

“In the *Reliques of Ancient Poetry* published about two years ago, is a very beautiful little ballad called ‘A Friar of Orders Gray.’ The ingenious editor, Mr. Percy, supposes that the stanzas sung by Ophelia in the play of *Hamlet*, were parts of some ballad well known in Shakspeare’s time, and from these stanzas, with the addition of one or two of his own to connect them, he has formed the above-mentioned ballad; the subject of which is, a lady comes to a convent to inquire for her love who had been driven there by her disdain. She is answered by a friar that he is dead—

‘No, no he is dead, gone to his death’s bed.
He never will come again.’

The lady weeps and laments her cruelty; the friar endeavours to comfort her with morality and religion, but all in vain; she expresses the deepest grief and the most tender sentiments of love, till at last the friar discovers himself—

*“And lo! beneath this gown of gray
Thy own true love appears.”*

“This catastrophe is very fine, and the whole, joined with the greatest tenderness has the greatest simplicity; yet though this ballad was so recently published in the *Ancient Reliques*, Dr. Goldsmith has been hardy enough to publish a poem called the *Hermit*, where the circumstances and catastrophe are exactly the same, only with this difference, that the natural simplicity and tenderness of the original is almost entirely lost in the languid smoothness and tedious paraphrase of the copy, which is as short of the merits of Mr. Per-

cy's ballad as the insipidity of negus is to the genuine flavour of Champagne. I am, Sir,

"Yours, &c.

"DETECTOR."

Kenrick, always a persecutor of the Poet, who laboured more diligently to pull down the reputation of others than to elevate his own, was supposed to be the writer. The taste displayed in the criticism might well have been left to its fate; but to the charge of being an unblushing plagiarist, and likewise to another accusation in the same journal of erroneously recommending a book of travels as new, which had been published some time before, a reply from him came out in a few days.*

"SIR."

"As there is nothing I dislike so much as newspaper controversy, particularly upon trifles, permit me to be as concise as possible in informing a correspondent of yours, that I recommended Blainville's travels because I thought the book was a good one; and I think so still. I said I was told by the bookseller that it was then first published; but in that it seems I was misinformed, and my reading was not extensive enough to set me right.

"Another correspondent of yours accuses me of having taken a ballad I published sometime ago from one by the ingenious Mr. Percy. I do not think there is any great resemblance between the two pieces in question. If there be any, his ballad was taken from mine. I read it to Mr. Percy some years ago; and he, as we both considered these things as trifles at best, told me with his usual good-humour the next time I saw him, that he had taken my plan to form the fragments of Shakspeare into a ballad of his own. He then read me his little Cento, if I may so call it, and I highly approved it. Such petty anecdotes as these are scarcely worth printing; and were it not for the busy disposition of some of your correspondents, the public should never have known that he owes me the hint of his ballad, or that I am obliged to his friendship and learning for communications of a much more important nature.

"I am, Sir, yours, &c.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

Of the correctness of this statement we have the following admission by a member of the Bishop's family in the last edition of the *Reliques*, appended to the "Friar of Orders Gray"—"As the foregoing song has been thought to have suggested to our late excellent poet Dr. Goldsmith, the plan of his beautiful ballad of 'Edwin and Emma,'† first printed in his *Vicar of Wakefield*, it is but justice to

* July 23...25. 1767. In the memoir of him published in 1801, this is erroneously said to have been *June* 1767.

† This misnomer is repeated in a note to *Gentle Herdsman*; no doubt from defective memory. The erroneous assertion of being *first* printed in the *Vicar of Wakefield*, is owing to want of accurate information from the Bishop, who was perfectly acquainted with the previous copy printed for Lady Northumberland.

his memory to declare that his poem was written first, and that if there is any imitation in the case, they will be found both to be indebted to the beautiful old ballad 'Gentle Herdsman,' &c. printed in Series II., Book i., No 14. of this work, which the Doctor had much admired in manuscript, and has finely improved."

A portion of the remark in this note is incorrect, so far as stating that the *plan* of the Hermit is derived from the Gentle Herdsman. On reference to that ballad no other similarity of plan will be found than simply that of a female pilgrim in male disguise, which she makes no scruple to acknowledge, inquiring her way of a herdsman whom she meets to Walsingham in Norfolk, where there appears to have been a celebrated image of the Virgin Mary, in order to do penance for that neglect of a former lover, which she details; and with the herdsman's direction to the town—

"Now go thy wayes, and God before !
For he must ever guide thee still ;
Turne downe that dale, the right-hand path,
And soe, fair pilgrim, fare thee well !"

the ballad concludes.

This very simple coincidence can scarcely be considered as diminishing his claim to originality in the design and conduct of the story; neither does the Friar of Orders Gray written in part by Dr. Percy appear to be a close imitation of the Hermit although the latter preceded it in order of time. The real resemblance of the ballad of Goldsmith to the Gentle Herdsman is rather in one or two of the *thoughts* than in plan, where in two or three stanzas the lady describing her waywardness towards her lover, expresses regret for her conduct. The following is the passage. If compared with the thirty-first and three following stanzas of Edwin and Angelina, the chief similarity to the ancient ballad will be found in the lines printed in Italics, and the obligation is certainly slight—

"And grew soe coy and nice to please,
As women's looks are often soe,
He might not kisse, nor hand forsooth,
Unlesse I willed him soe to do.

"Thus being wearyed with delayes,
To see I pityed not his greeffe,
He gott him to a secret place,
And there he dyed without releeffe.

"And for his sake these weeds I weare,
And sacrifice my tender age;
And every day Ile beg my bread,
To undergoe this pilgrimage.

"Thus every day I fast and pray,
And ever will doe till I dye;
And gett me to some secret place,
For soe did he, and soe will I."

Thirty years after this attempt to detract from his credit, another.

and for the moment more formidable, attack upon his originality appeared; but though no longer able to defend himself, there were friends qualified and willing to vindicate his fame.

In the year 1797 came out a small volume of *Essays of ordinary character*, under the name of "The Quiz," in which appeared a French poem, *Raimond et Angéline*, said to be transcribed from an old and scarce novel in that language, called '*Les deux Habitants de Lozanne*'; and this the writers asserted, was the original from which Goldsmith had taken his ballad. A notice in the *Monthly Review* for September of the same year drew attention to the charge; the writer of the criticism though doubtful as he says of this "pretended original" was so much at a loss to decide the matter, as to add in another passage, "After all it is possible (we mean barely possible) that Goldsmith was innocent of the theft with which he is here charged." And reference is then made to previous rumour, meaning the attack and defence just mentioned, of the poem *not* being the composition of Goldsmith, but in the words of the critic, of "an ingenious friend, whose name we now spare to repeat, from respect to a character which is deservedly held in high estimation in the republic of letters."

The allusion to all acquainted with literary history plainly pointed to Bishop Percy, who too just to permit the reputation of a departed friend to be sacrificed either to himself, or to a foreign production that bore little traces of being an original, addressed the following letter to the *Review*. Without directly avowing his name, no secrecy was affected, and Dr. Griffiths at once knew the writer, to whose critical discernment and friendship it is equally creditable.

"You owe the trouble of a letter from an unknown correspondent to a motive which you have too much candour not to approve. The subject requires no farther introduction and will speak for itself.

"In your account of the *Quiz* (*Review*, Sept. Art. 66,) you insert a French poem given by the authors as the original of Goldsmith's *Edwin and Angelina* and which seems to be considered by you as such. As the English Poet unfortunately for the world and for himself cannot assert his claim to his own work, it is a necessary duty of an old acquaintance and friend of his to do it for him.

"To judge only from internal evidence there is no need of any profound judgment to discover at once, that the French is a translation from the English; and as it is possible the translator is living and may read this, he would do better to acknowledge his imitation than take to himself the silent enjoyment of an honour not his due;—perhaps an honour unsought and unapproved.

"As I would wish that this point should be determined upon principles of taste and judgment (for the assertion of an anonymous correspondent that other proof could be obtained cannot be supposed to have much weight,) it may be observed that the title of *Raymond and Angelina* does as well for an English as a French poem; but as *Edwin and Angelina* would not be so well in French, the translator rejected the original title and adopted another. Let it also be re-

membered that the French were once in the habit of making popular English poems of this kind their own. *Old Robin Gray* was translated by Florian; to whom from mere circumstances I should attribute the poem in question;—but I may be mistaken, and as is above-mentioned, the author may be living to own his agreeable imitation, which I should be glad to see without the faults that at present disfigure it.

“My zeal for the honour of an original English Poet has occasioned the above remarks, which I have purposely contracted out of a proper regard to your limits for insertion.”

A note of the Reviewer in reply* denied having been really imposed upon by the French piece, and its apologetical tone sufficiently indicates the knowledge of his correspondent, whose hint that further proof of the originality of the English ballad could be obtained if necessary, was immediately understood as proceeding from the Prelate, to whom so many years before it had been ascribed.

The subject however was not permitted to rest. Nearly a year afterward (July 1798 another correspondent of the Review zealous for the honour of English poetry, or possibly the Bishop writing through a friend, traces the imitation to its source; by this we find that it was taken not from an old, but from a recent novel, the title of which by some error in order to draw attention to the volume in which the story appeared and at the same time prevent detection by furnishing a wrong clue to inquiry, was misstated; the following is the communication.

“In the Review for Sept. 1797, p. 113, in the critique on a publication entitled *The Quiz* is given a French Poem which the writers of the Quiz have ventured to tell the public is taken ‘from an old and scarce French novel’ and which they have the effrontery to add, is the original of Goldsmith’s charming ballad. The title which they give to the work is *Les deux Habitants de Lozanne*.

“For the honour of Goldsmith and from the love of truth, I beg leave to inform you that the poem literally as these writers have given it, is to be found in so modern a book as ‘*Lettres de deux Amans, Habitans de Lyon*’ by M. Léonard, 1792. Their accusation of Goldsmith being probably the only part of this work which has been deemed worth notice, and much inquiry having been ineffectually made for a book under the title which they have given to it, this notice may not be unnecessary.

“M. Léonard is the author of some pastorals and a young writer; and probably had he seen our English journals, would have correct-

* “Begging our correspondent’s pardon we did not consider the French poem as really the original of Goldsmith’s Edwin and Angelina. The parenthesis (‘barely possible’) in our observation pointed *another way*; and perhaps our delicacy has occasioned our being misunderstood; but we did apprehend that we had sufficiently manifested our scepticism, without presuming to decide on a point which required more examination than we had leisure to afford to the subject. On the whole our ideas and those of our correspondent seem to be nearly the same. We shall be happy to hear again from him on any future occasion.”—*Monthly Review*, Oct. 1797.

ed the ignorance or the malignity of the anonymous writers above-mentioned."

Other correspondents of the same critical journal were led to the same conclusion; among these was M. Bisset a Frenchman and a scholar, and translator of the Vicar of Wakefield into that language, who from internal evidence only, pronounced *Raimond et Angéline* without doubt, a translation or imitation of the Hermit, of which it appears there are at least four known in French literature, this of M. Léonard being of the number.* The fame of Goldsmith therefore remains unimpaired; nor would it be necessary to advert to the matter at length, were not the accusation as too often happens remembered, while its refutation is forgotten or unknown. Even in the last and hitherto best edition of his poems, brought out under the superintendence of a gentleman whose taste and knowledge of poetry are acknowledged, the priority of the English poem, from his not having seen the whole of the facts, is left in some degree of doubt.†

The reputation derived from the Traveller, led him about this time to contemplate, in imitation of some great poetical predecessors, the translation into our language of a foreign work of standard merit, and with this view he mentioned to some friends the *Lusiad* of Camoens. Dr. Johnson it appears entertained a similar design in the earlier part of his literary career, from whom possibly the hint may have been taken. Whether it went farther with Goldsmith than mere preliminary consideration, may be doubted. Want of knowledge of the language, which with application might have been surmounted in a few months, formed probably the least objection. The real difficulties were total want of the means of support during its execution, the length of time it promised to occupy, and the laborious perseverance required in a long poem by one whose taste was confessedly fastidious in the construction and polishing off his verses.

It is on such occasions that the disadvantages of a professional author, destitute of fixed means of support are most acutely felt; with his eye eagerly fixed on immortality and with powers of an order capable of attaining to it, he may be doomed to experience while toiling for fame, the want of daily bread. Such in some

* "L'Érémite, ballade (ou romance) charmante, tirée du *Vicaire de Wakefield*, et dont nous connoissons au moins quatre imitations françaises, dont l'une, par Léonard est intitulée *Angéline et Raymond*." *Biog. Universelle*, tom. 18.—1817. *Art. Goldsmith*.

† Long after this was written the subject occurred in conversation with a lady celebrated for the success of her writings in fiction, when the writer heard from her that she, when very young, along with others, were the writers of the Quiz. The French poem certainly attracted much of their attention, and they believed it at the moment the original whence Goldsmith had taken his ballad. The volume which contained it had been brought from France as she informed the writer by the Duke de Levis and given to Sir Abraham Hume, from whom it came into her hands, and was, as she was informed and believed, an *old*, not a recent novel. On stating to her a few of the circumstances detailed above, she admitted that some mistake must have occurred. No design certainly existed of *wantonly* assailing the fame of Goldsmith.

measure, is said to have been the case with Mickle, who afterwards undertook and completed a translation of the same work which continues to keep its hold on public esteem; but his habits were more provident and his temperament more calm than those of Goldsmith, though in other points, particularly in absence, and simplicity of manner in general society, their characters bore some resemblance. During the progress of the version it was avowedly submitted to the author of the Traveller, and experienced the benefit of his corrections.

Willing to profit by the current of approbation running in his favour, a volume of scattered papers hitherto but little productive of fame or profit, were drawn from their anonymous shelter and assigned to the right owner. On the 3d June 1765 appeared in a duodecimo volume printed for Newbery and Griffin, "Essays by Mr. Goldsmith,"* with the motto in allusion to their resuscitation, *Collecta Revirescunt*. Aided by his poetical reputation, they received immediate notice in the daily journals, of which one, in introducing the amusing preface to the volume, may serve as a specimen of the whole; these articles were then contributed by the first writers of the day. "Dr. Goldsmith, the so justly admired author of the Traveller, having this week published a volume of Essays, we thought we could not entertain our readers better than by an extract from these excellent pieces, in which a redundancy of the most natural humour, together with the deepest strength of judgment, and the widest range of understanding, are all united to render one of the first poets in the English language, one of the first essayists too. In a preface written with uncommon vivacity the Doctor acquaints us, that the different Essays which compose this volume have appeared at different times and in different publications."†

The papers now reproduced were twenty-seven in number. The first, second, third, fifth sixth, seventh, eighth, and fifteenth, were from the Bee; the fourth from the Busy Body; the tenth, eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth, eighteenth, twentieth, and twenty-third, from the Citizen of the World; the seventeenth and twenty-second from the Lady's Magazine; nineteenth, twenty-first, and twenty-fourth, from the British Magazine. Of the latter, the first, a Reverie at the Boar's Head Tavern in East Cheap, formed three papers in that work, and the last had already been transferred by himself into the Citizen of the World on its appearance in volumes. The original sources whence the ninth, sixteenth, twenty-fifth, twenty-sixth, and twenty-seventh were taken, are difficult to be traced, from being

* Lloyd's Evening Post, June 3—5. 1765,—“Price three shillings bound.” In the title-page of the second edition, the Christian name “Oliver” is used instead of “Mr.” Goldsmith.—It may be worthy of notice, that in another newspaper (St. James's Chronicle, June 11—13.) where the Essays are advertised for the first time, appears the announcement of a book “The Generous Briton, or Authentic Memoirs of William Goldsmith, Esq.,” though this probably had no reference to the Bard. The name however, and the term *generous*, so often and justly applied to him, present a curious coincidence.

† Lloyd's Evening Post.—June 5th—7th, 1765.

copied like so many of the others, without acknowledgment into a variety of the publications of the time. Of the extent of this depredation to which allusion has been made, we may form some idea from his own account—"If there be a pride in multiplied editions, I have seen some of my labours sixteen times reprinted, and claimed by different parents as their own. I have seen them flourished at the beginning with praise, and signed at the end with the names of Philautos, Philalethes, Philelutheros, and Philanthropos."

That he should have taken so many papers from the *Citizen of the World*, appears to confirm the remark already made, that in the collected form and under its new title that work had sold indifferently, or that he must have formed a very high idea of their excellence by re-introducing them to notice; several were altered a little, including those from the *Bee*, in their introductory matter; and names and circumstances changed or omitted the better to suit their new position. A politer air was also assumed in a few of the local allusions; thus in the fifth paper, taken from the *Bee*, one of the characters talked of procuring an appetite by a walk in the gardens of White Conduit House, which in the *Essays* is changed to a walk in the Park. The selection which seems to have been done in haste, is perhaps less interesting than might have been easily made, but it served probably all he intended, a momentary exigency. A second edition with slight alterations, appeared in the following year.

In France, as at home, these *Essays* acquired considerable popularity; translations appeared by Prince Boris de Galitzin in 1787, reprinted in 1805 under the title of *Contes Moraux de Goldsmith*; by M. Castena in 1788; by M. Dampmartin in 1803; and again anonymously in 1808 under the inappropriate title of *Essais d'Éducation et de Morale à l'Usage de la Jeunesse*. The paper detailing the "Distresses of a disabled Soldier" seemed to remind that nation of one of the personages introduced for the purpose of ridicule in a well-known story of Voltaire. "Those," says one of their writers, "who would have in a few pages, an idea of the genius, at once national and sprightly, of Goldsmith, should read his story of a poor fellow, an old disabled soldier, the most diverting kind of optimist that can be imagined."

The sum received for the volume was twenty guineas; ten from each of the publishers, as appears by the receipt given in a preceding page. One of them indeed, Newbery, from his constant disbursements of various sums from the very moderate amount of two shillings to many pounds, might be called his cash-keeper in ordinary; and may remind the reader of a passage in one of his letters alluding to the humour of Scarron, who in jocular reference to the sums drawn from his bookseller, called himself Marquess of *Quenault*; so now had he been disposed to pursue the jest, he might have called himself Marquess of *Newbery*. The following is a list still in existence, of several of these items, supplied at various times without regular dates being kept; and a few, noted at the moment they seem to have been given, in pencil, remain so.

				£	s.	d.
Lent Dr. Goldsmith for his instrument (<i>in pencil</i>)	-	-	-	0	10	6
Doctor Goldsmith, Dr.						
Money lent at the Society of Arts (<i>in pencil</i>)	-	-	-	3	3	0
Feb. 14. Lent Dr. Goldsmith (<i>in pencil</i>)	-	-	-	1	1	0
March 5. Dr. Goldsmith	-	-	-	15	15	0
May 1. Lent Dr. Goldsmith	-	-	-	0	10	6
Ditto	-	-	-	0	2	6
July 14. Dr. Goldsmith	-	-	-	29	8	0
Aug. 15. Ditto	-	-	-	4	4	0
Sept. 1. Ditto	-	-	-	5	5	0
Nov. 17. Lent Dr. Goldsmith	-	-	-	0	5	3
July 7th, 1764. Lent Dr. Goldsmith (<i>in pencil</i>)	-	-	-	0	2	0
Lent before (<i>in pencil</i>)	-	-	-	0	2	6
April 30, 1765.						
Lent Dr. Goldsmith at the Society (of Arts)						
(<i>in pencil</i>)	-	-	-	3	3	0

Among his other labours for this useful and friendly publisher, it is suggested to the writer by a gentleman* whose literary eminence entitles his opinions to every attention, whether Goldsmith may not have written for him in its present form, the nursery tale of Goody Two Shoes; a story which however seemingly beneath the dignity of his powers, exhibits as he remarks the skill, ingenuity, good taste, and good feeling of a practised writer of no inferior order. In pursuing the hint, the date became a primary object to ascertain. The newspapers, after many vain inquiries in other quarters, supplied the necessary information by diligent search; by these it appears to have issued from the publisher early in the year 1765, when the pecuniary means of the Poet were known to be at a low ebb, and no employment would probably have been refused, although such was his occasional pride that he would not be known to give his pen to what seemed a childish subject. No certain proof however exists of his connexion with a tale which far from lowering, would add to the versatility and ingenuity of his pen; the reader must therefore be left to form his own judgment. The humorous advertisement of the publisher by which it was introduced to the notice of his young friends is subjoined.†

Nearly at the same period he contemplated, or rather perhaps Newbery for him, short biographies of the Philosophers, fitted for monthly publication in the Christian's Magazine, a subject which he afterwards entered into more fully in a translation from the French.

* Mr. William Godwin; whose death is just announced almost at the moment of passing this page through the press; he was urgent with the writer to endeavour to ascertain the truth of his conjecture, and no reasonable means have been spared for that purpose.

† "We are also desired to give notice that there is in the press and speedily will be published either by subscription or otherwise as the public shall please to determine —

"The History of Little Goody Two Shoes, otherwise Mrs. Margery Two Shoes.

"With the means by which she acquired her learning and wisdom, and in consequence thereof, her estate; set forth at large for the benefit of those —

"Who from a state of rags and care
And having shoes but half a pair
Their fortune and their fame should fix
And gallop in a coach and six."

Public Advertiser, December 17, 1764.

An intimation of the design was thus conveyed to the readers of that work in its announcements. "We are much obliged to our correspondent for the hint respecting the lives of the most eminent Philosophers, which we think with him may be rendered extremely useful as well as entertaining. They shall therefore be given regularly in the next volume of our Magazine, after we have written the life of St. Athanasius, and so completed our design of laying before the Reader the lives of the most eminent Fathers and Christians of the third and fourth centuries."

By the following memorandum, his compilation on Experimental Philosophy appears to have been finished as far as it was at first meant to be carried; but the subject requiring additions and extension of plan, he was furnished with another supply of books for that purpose, treating on such subjects as were necessary to notice. This no doubt was the work, or rudiments of the work, published after his death in two volumes octavo, under the title of "A Survey of Experimental Philosophy, considered in its Present State of Improvement."

"Sent to Dr. Goldsmith Sept. 11th, 1765, from Canbery (Canonbury) House the copy of the Philosophy to be revised, with the Abbé Nollet's Philosophy, and to have an account added of Hale's Ventilation, together with the following books:—

1. Pemberton's Newton, 4to.
2. Two pamphlets of Mr. Franklin's on Electricity.
3. 1 of Ferguson's Astronomy, 4to.
4. D'Alembert's Treatise of Fluids, 4to.
5. Martin's Philosophy, 3 vols. 8vo.
6. Ferguson's Lectures, ditto.
7. Helsham's, ditto.
8. Kiel's Introduction, ditto.
9. Kiel's Astronomy, ditto.
10. Nature displayed, 7 vols. 12mo.
11. Nollet's Philosophy, 3 vols. 12mo."

To a periodical journal issuing from the same publisher "Museum Rusticum et Commerciale" he is believed to have furnished contributions of a miscellaneous nature. It was announced to be "Revised and Digested by several Members of the Society of Arts," and reports of its proceedings and papers would, as a frequent attendant on their meetings, come well from his hand. On this account Newbery may have given him (or lent) those sums at their rooms given in a preceding page.

The precarious nature of his finances, induced several well-meaning friends to propose to him to take advantage of the publicity of his name, and like Akenside, endeavour to procure a more certain income from his original profession of physic.

Among others who recommended this step and took some interest in promoting it, was Sir Joshua, then Mr. Reynolds and some ladies, Mrs. Montagu, to whom he had recently become known, being as the writer has been informed among the number. They were not aware that a name for poetry, far from promoting commonly mars, though for no sufficient reason, the practice of a physician. Mankind seem to have agreed that no individual shall be permitted to

possess excellence in two pursuits, and he who is dependent on such prejudice had better submit to than contend with it. Willing to make the experiment, he assumed a more conspicuous and expensive, though as appears from the fashion of that day, not at all an unusual medical garb. A professional wig, a cane, purple silk small clothes, a scarlet roquelaure buttoned to the chin, and charged as we find in his tailor's account-book in June 1765 at four guineas and a half, made him an exceedingly smart physician. Transformations of this kind in men who are more familiar with books than with common life, are often in extremes; a few of his friends amused themselves with the change; and as if to satisfy others, or please himself with the experiment whether variety of dress could acquire practice, three other suits are charged to him within the short space of six months. A man servant likewise was soon afterward added to his establishment.

It is remembered that he was occasionally employed by his acquaintance during illness; the fees however were not sufficiently numerous to be an object of serious pursuit, and the restrictions, as he considered them, so many upon his time and amusements as to become irksome. The gravity of a practising physician required he should abstain from scenes of familiar resort formerly sought and enjoyed, and with something of regret he avowed that "he was now shut out from many places where he had formerly played the fool very agreeably." The caprice of patients, and differences of opinion with some of his brethren, tended to increase distaste towards his calling, an instance of which is remembered by the lady to whom these volumes are indebted for several anecdotes, and which was told her by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

He had been called in to a Mrs. Sidebotham, an acquaintance, labouring under illness, and having examined and considered the case, wrote his prescription. The quality or quantity of the medicine ordered, exciting the notice of the apothecary in attendance, he demurred to administer it to the patient; an argument ensued which had no effect in convincing either party of error, and some heat being produced by the contention, an appeal was at length made to the patient to know by whose opinion and practice she chose to abide. She, deeming the apothecary the better judge of the two from being longer in attendance, decided for him; and Goldsmith quitted the house highly indignant, declaring to Sir Joshua he would leave off prescribing for friends. "Do so, my dear Doctor;" replied Topham Beauclerk when he heard the story and afterwards jested with him on the subject, "whenever you undertake to kill let it be only your enemies."

CHAPTER XVI.

Dr. Joseph Warton.—Vicar of Wakefield.—History of Philosophy and Philosophers.—Poems for Young Ladies.—Beauties of English Poesy:—English Grammar.—Byron's Voyage.—Residence in the Temple.—Anecdotes.—Mr. William Hodson.

IN the literary societies of the metropolis about this time, as well as in those private assemblages to which nearly all persons of talents found ready admission, Goldsmith added largely to his acquaintance. In one of these he met Dr. Joseph Warton, probably for the first time, who thus expresses his opinion of him to his brother in January 1766, with something of the severity of a rival wit and author: "Of all solemn coxcombs, Goldsmith is the first; yet sensible;—but affects to use Johnson's hard words in conversation."

There is a disposition in human nature to scrutinize into the manners of contemporaries, particularly those of men of reputation, much more severely than such as are seen through the medium of time or distance; and this perhaps is the reason why we are more just to dead than to living excellence; we permit too often the imperfections and frailties of the man to cloud our view of his merits, and it is only when time mellows the prospect that he is contemplated in his true position with that reasonable allowance for infirmity which all human beings require. The remark of Warton seems to imply a little vanity in the behaviour of his new acquaintance; and if this is all that can be alleged against a successful poet, fresh in the enjoyment of his honours, the offence is not very heinous. But if he were really guilty of assuming some momentary importance of manner, it may not have been without cause. Persons had been attracted to him by fame of the poem, who expecting in the company of Johnson, to find the same point or energy in conversation, felt disposed in their disappointment to underrate such merit as he really possessed: while he in renewed efforts to retain his due station in social intercourse, may have overshot the mark, and in throwing off natural simplicity of character, fell into, as would appear in this instance, occasional pedantry; this indeed appears to be sometimes the only escape of a really diffident man from absolute taciturnity among associates where he observes some jealous or considerable pretention.

One of his pecuniary obligations in the nature of loan, bears date about this time, the immediate object of which was said to have been a short journey into the country, whither, or for what purpose, does not appear.

"Received from Mr. Newbery eleven guineas, which I promise to pay.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"Jan. 8, 1766."

The illness of Dr. Johnson about this time, attended with hypochondriacal symptoms difficult to shake off, exercised his friendship in cheering the sufferer by frequent visits, a duty in which he had the aid of Mr. Murphy; and both being cheerful, their endeavours produced the best effects. Mr. and Mrs. Thrale who had but recently formed the acquaintance of a lexicographer, united in the same friendly object, and to the care of this lady Goldsmith gave due praise. "To her attention," he said, "Johnson owed his recovery."

Soon afterward, Boswell who had been travelling on the Continent since 1763, returned to London, when the evening meetings with Johnson and Goldsmith at the Mitre were occasionally resumed. The former having now ceased to drink wine, sometimes refused to go; on these occasions they passed the evening in his rooms, trying to give a new direction to the broodings of a melancholy spirit by amusing conversation, they being supplied with wine, and the moralist confining himself to water.

"Doctor," said he to Goldsmith in allusion to his own former efforts in, and subsequent neglect of poetry, "I am not quite idle; I made one line t'other day; but I made no more." "Let us hear it," replied Goldsmith, "we'll put a bad one to it." "No, sir," returned Johnson, "I have forgotten it."

By a letter from the latter to Mr. Langton written early in March, it appears that Goldsmith seldom failed in attending their weekly evening meetings. "Dyer," he says, "is constant at the club; Hawkins is remiss; I am not over diligent; Dr. Nugent, Dr. Goldsmith, and Mr. Reynolds are very constant."

On the 27th March, 1766, came out the Vicar of Wakefield, which immediately received the applause due to merits of a great and original kind.*

Nothing more strongly exemplifies the different estimates occasionally formed of a literary work by the publisher or his advisers, and by the public, than the fate of this beautiful tale, which to the former appeared so doubtful of popular favour as to be retained by him in manuscript for two, or nearly two years, after the purchase, afraid as it should seem, of risking the expence of publication. Of this opinion also by his own confession was Dr. Johnson; and he adduced it afterward in conversation in proof of the little dependence to be placed on individual judgment regarding a work of imagination. We are told however that on a previous occasion, when disposing of it in order to relieve the author from his difficulties, he saw its merits; this might very well be, without implying contradiction; he saw much in it to admire, but doubted whether similar taste or opinion was likely to influence general readers; it could not however be slightly valued even at first to secure for the author the sum of sixty guineas.

One of the causes of lying dormant so long, may have arisen

* The following is the first advertisement. "In a few days will be published in two volumes twelve, *The Vicar of Wakefield*. A tale; supposed to be written by himself. Printed for F. Newbery in Paternoster Row."—*Lloyd's Evening Post*, March 19....21. 1776.

from not being sold, as it would appear, to John Newbery, in whose books and papers there is no record of the transaction. His nephew, Francis Newbery, residing at the Crown (as booksellers had then their signs,) in Paternoster Row, was the publisher; and he having had no previous connexion with the Poet, may have had less confidence in the success of the work. It may have been delayed likewise with the expectation of undergoing careful revision, and altering objectionable circumstances in the story; a task which however the author declined, alleging as is said,—and the argument must be considered powerful in the estimate of an author militant,—that whatever time or labour should be expended on the alterations, no increase would be made to the purchase money. That he corrected the language afterwards appears by the variations between the first and subsequent editions.

The Vicar of Wakefield secured friends among every description of readers; with the old by the purity of its moral lessons, and with the young by the interest of the story. It had the merit of originality by differing from nearly all its predecessors. [With the popular productions before him of Fielding and Smollett, he studiously avoided their track by excluding variety of adventures, immoral scenes, and licentious intrigues, which under the plausible plea of exhibiting human nature, give us not only the worst parts of it, but almost necessarily corrupt the minds of youth by familiarising what it is never prudent wantonly to display. He was equally regardless of the example of Richardson, of his prolixity and sentimental refinements, however he may have honoured his morality. He had determined that his novel should not be too long to be perused with ease, and what was read should leave no taint of impurity behind.

But its great charm, as of all the productions of Goldsmith, is close adherence to nature; nature in its commendable, not vicious, points of view; we find little in incident or character overstrained, excepting perhaps the moral turpitude of Thornhill, and this scarcely exceeds what was common among fashionable rakes in the novels of the time. The Primrose family is a great creation of genius; such a picture of warm-hearted simplicity, mingled with the little foibles and weaknesses common to the best specimens of humanity, that we find nothing like it in the whole range of fiction. Each of the individuals is nicely discriminated without apparant art or effort; we can anticipate what either will do, and almost will say, on any given occasion. The unwearied benevolence and submission to the will of Providence under all his distresses of the good pastor; the self-satisfied cleverness and little female devices to accomplish favourite purposes, of his wife; the liveliness and indiscretion of Olivia; the more considerate and sedate turn of Sophia; the pedantry yet simplicity of Moses; and goodness of heart of all, present a piece of moral painting of great beauty and of rare skill.

The other characters as they interest us less, please us less, from the disguised Burchell down to Jenkins the instrument of young Thornhill's vices. The conduct of the story has the merit of never

once leading us from the main design of exhibiting the family in all their trials from the commencement to the conclusion, excepting the episode of the adventures of the son. The style is peculiarly easy, perspicuous, and simple, free from all attempt at fine writing or ambitious ornament, and without even one of those epigrammatic smartnesses which the apprehension of being considered dull led him occasionally to introduce into his *Essays*. This, among its other merits, has contributed to render the *Vicar of Wakefield* perhaps the most popular of all English books on the continent of Europe.

Few tests of the merit of a work of fiction are probably better than the admiration of foreigners, for it forms pretty good evidence that in the characters or circumstances of the story, our general nature, not the mere manners of a country, is happily portrayed. Fictions may be written and acquire a large share of success among ourselves, yet signally fail in securing favour among other nations; but popularity abroad as well as at home leaves less doubt of the existence of true genius in the writer. It is thus with the romances of Cervantes and *Le Sage*; and if we seek for higher examples they are to be found in the writings of Homer and other great masters in poetry. So likewise with the tale of Goldsmith. In France they enumerate seven different translations which have passed through innumerable editions; in Germany it is little less popular; in Italy also familiarly known; and in these countries, as well as in the north of Europe, it is the first English book put into the hands of such as learn our language.

Critical wisdom however is seldom satisfied without discovering defects; and as we fancy ourselves privileged to speak freely of all we love, this may be done in the present instance without diminishing our regard. Of the existence of such he himself had obvious misgivings. "There are a hundred faults in this thing," he tells us in the advertisement, "and a hundred things might be said to prove them beauties. But it is needless. A book may be amusing with numerous errors, or it may be dull without a single absurdity."

The character of Mrs. Primrose though rendered amusing by her foibles, is drawn in education and manners beneath what is usual in an intelligent clergyman's wife, but this objection seems anticipated by the words put into her husband's mouth, that he chose her, "as she did her wedding gown, not for a fine glossy surface, but such qualities as would wear well." Olivia's conduct in submitting to be married by a popish priest, which she is injudiciously made to admit she knew not to be binding, is not satisfactory. Sophia comes less frequently forward to exhibit her good sense and prudence in conversation than we wish. About Sir William Thornhill there is a coldness that wins little of our regard; possessed of power, wealth, and reputed benevolence, he takes no steps to assist a worthy and benevolent man struggling with poverty, whose hospitality he enjoys and to whose daughter he exhibits attachment, but leaves the family to the machinations of his nephew, in consequence of an error on their part, arising as he must have understood, from justifiable in-

dignation towards him whom they conceived guilty of treachery and ingratitude. His disguise near his own estates, cannot be reconciled with probability. Neither can we believe that one so avowedly virtuous, would entrust a large portion of his fortune to a nephew capable of appropriating it to the worst purposes, and of whose character he could not, from previous admissions and the report of the country, be ignorant. A few inadvertencies and legal errors, though of no moment, required little trouble to amend. Thus George Primrose is told on departing to join his regiment, to emulate his grandfather who fell in the same field with Lord Falkland; this if taken literally would make the Vicar more than a century old. In a threat of Burchell it is assumed, that simply breaking the lock of a pocket book found near their habitation, subjected the parties upon complaint to a justice of peace, to be "all hanged up at their own door." We find also that sending a challenge though it be not accepted, is a capital offence; that a justice of peace on his sole authority can free a culprit from a criminal charge by representing it in a different light to the committing magistrate; and that a gaoler would permit a coiner imprisoned for trial, to quit his custody on verbal authority from the same magistrate; mistakes which as they may mislead foreigners, would have been better avoided. But when criticism enumerates these, it has done its worst; the feelings of the reader rise up in judgment against the critic, he throws aside the lucubration, and turns to reperuse what has given him so much pleasure.

The origin of the tale, or rather the reason for fixing the scene near Wakefield, is said* to have arisen from an excursion made into Yorkshire about the period at which it was written; with what view we are unacquainted; but there is reason to believe he spent some months in that county at some previous period. Its foundation seems shadowed out in the story alluded to among the papers printed in the British Magazine. The name of the vicarage however is probably fanciful, but by a curious coincidence it has been ascertained from contemporary statements, that the daughter of the actual Vicar of Wakefield, the Rev. Dr. W., married about this period a Captain M. of the militia, without, as is said, having previously obtained the parental sanction; hence rumour induced a suspicion, unfounded no doubt, that with such additions as imagination supplied he had touched upon circumstances in real life.†

* By Mr. Cradock, in his Memoirs; but the assertion is vaguely made.

† Another coincidence may be mentioned. The Vicar's wife is made to speak of "The family of the Blenkinsops," known for a physical peculiarity of which the name is indicative. Yet a family so called, though it is scarcely necessary to say not distinguished in the manner described in the novel, lived in this part of the country, and in some of its descendants Miss Jane, Anna Maria, Sir Robert Kerr, and Dr. Ogilvie Porter, of Bristol, have exhibited talents of a high order. To three of these names no commendation is necessary; of the fourth, Dr. Porter, it may be necessary to say that the labours of an anxious profession have alone prevented him from pursuing the tastes of his youth and displaying equal literary talent with that which obtains in his family. Their father who was descended from a respectable family in the north of Ireland, while serving in the Enniskillen Dragoons married a Miss Blenkinsop of an ancient family in the north of England.

We need not however refer to such an accidental occurrence for its origin. The fact no doubt really was, that having sketched an innocent family less acquainted with the world than their station in life implied, he chose a scene pointing to a distant county as more likely to favour the illusion by the presumed simpler manners of the people. For some of the incidents he unquestionably taxed his recollections of early life. The primitive habits of Lissoy and Kilkenny West furnished hints which when applied to the interior of an English Vicarage were thought, and perhaps truly, inappropriate or overcharged, but this no doubt formed the real source of some of its characters and scenes. As usual also we find much of himself. The adventures of George Primrose were without doubt nearly similar to his own. He makes Sir William Thornhill also travel over the continent of Europe on foot and return about the age of thirty, his own age nearly when the same feat was performed. He makes him talk of his "sickly sensibility of the miseries of others," his good nature, bounties, and improvidences, "his conversation that of a man of sense, his actions those of a fool;" his giving promises in lieu of money, when the latter was exhausted, and experiencing in consequence from needy dependants little but contempt and reproaches; circumstances which are known to have occurred, or were applied, to himself. The character of the Vicar is a more extended draught of the Pastor in the Deserted Village, and meant, as was said by the family, for his father. The private marriages of two of his sisters may have supplied hints in detailing the conduct of Olivia. Burchell was the name of one of his connexions by marriage.

The time at which it was written seems to have been earlier than is commonly supposed, the better part probably in 1762. In the nineteenth chapter we find the supposed "parliament man" in his violent effusion of political zeal asking the Vicar whether he had seen "the last *Auditor*?" the first number of which paper, carried on by Mr. Murphy, was advertised to appear on the 10th June in that year, and continued some months. It is certain that the novel was not a hasty production, written as is said with the immediate view of extrication from pecuniary difficulty, but like his poems, the product of moments stolen from the ordinary labours of compilation.

Toward the end of May a second edition was called for; on the 25th August a third; and preserving its popularity a sixth appeared about the time of his death. Some further pecuniary advantages may have been derived from these successive reprints, but probably not much, as in June we find him by a memorandum now before the writer in want of money, a bill drawn upon Newbery for fifteen guineas being returned dishonoured. We may account therefore for his declining to make alterations which were likely to be profitable only to the bookseller.

Dr. Johnson tells us of two omissions made previous to publication. "I remember," said he, "a passage in Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield* which he was afterwards fool enough to expunge. 'I do not love a man who is zealous for nothing.' There was another fine

passage too which he struck out. 'When I was a young man being anxious to distinguish myself, I was perpetually starting new propositions. But I soon gave this over; for I found that generally what was new was false.' This was probably said in the character of the Vicar, for we find retained in the adventures of his son an allusion to the same subject when he commences author in London—"I therefore drest up three paradoxes with some ingenuity. They were false indeed but they were new. The jewels of truth have been so often imported by others, that nothing was left for me to import but some splendid things that at a distance looked every bit as well."

A few other passages which were also struck out and have been hitherto unnoticed may not be uninteresting to the reader. The Vicar speaking of his wife's behaviour to Burchell says, "One almost at the verge of beggary thus to assume language of the most insulting affluence, might excite the ridicule of ill-nature." "For he (Moses) always ascribed to his wit that laughter which was lavished on his simplicity." When Thornhill, in the eyes of the zealous mother, seems likely to prove a husband to one of her daughters the Vicar thus checks her anticipations—"But those who either aim at husbands greater than themselves or at the ten thousand pound prize, have been fools for their ridiculous claims, whether successful or not." In allusion to Thornhill's supposed free-thinking opinions, and the apology made for them by Moses that men could not be answerable for their thoughts, part of the Vicar's reply is—"Like corrupt judges on a bench they determine right on that part of the evidence they hear, but they will not hear all the evidence. Thus my son," &c. Of those who are advancing in guilt it is said—"They no longer continue to have shame at doing evil, and shame attends only upon their virtues." George Primrose when dragged into prison is made to exclaim in reply to his father's lamentation—"It is my last happiness that I have committed no murder though I have lost all hopes of pardon."

The verbal alterations made on revisal are very numerous; the additions amount to only a few sentences of no moment, but among these are the well-known word *Fudge*,* ejaculated by Burchell at the conclusion of each paragraph of the conversation of Miss Wilhelmina Skeggs and her companion; in the first edition it is only quoted once. That edition though published in London was printed at Salisbury.

Nearly on the same day as the Vicar of Wakefield, appeared Miss Anna Williams's volume of *Miscellanies*, to which Johnson furnished the chief pieces. Goldsmith in common with others of her acquaintance was likewise pledged to assist, and in discussing the matter, usually replied "leave it to me." But it may be doubted whether he contributed to the volume; nothing certainly is to be found there of which we are informed, though from his carelessness regarding short

* Rendered more remarkable by the public attention lately drawn to it in consequence of a trial for libel against a newspaper in the Court of King's Bench, when many opinions were given on its exact signification; and particular reference made to its use by Goldsmith.

pieces this forms no proof to the contrary. His own necessities may have had too many urgent claims upon his time to permit attention to those of another; and in looking over the articles, no sufficient clue to a production of his is afforded by internal evidence. The jest passed upon her and his own homeliness of face, when in toasting the ugliest man and woman their names were coupled, and which some one mischievously communicated, is said to have estranged him from her society before or about this period.

Translations from the French formed one of his occasional resources, which were seldom acknowledged by himself; and information was therefore chiefly derived from his employers when death had removed any scruples regarding the disclosure. One of these, executed for Mr. Francis Newbery and which appeared toward the end of June, was "A Concise History of Philosophy and Philosophers. By M. Formey, M. D. E. S. Member of the Academy of Sciences of Berlin."

A duodecimo volume cannot be supposed to furnish very ample information on the speculative opinions of distinguished men of all countries since nearly the creation of the world. The outline of their theories is therefore as short as it is possible to make it. We have little more than an enumeration of names and systems, from Zoroaster and Belus to Leibnitz and Newton; and more was scarcely necessary to the general reader, who soon discovers that many of the systems and some of the maxims of ancient philosophy, are erroneous, or admit of little practical application to the chief duties of men; that a few pages of the sacred volume of Christianity contains more moral truth, beauty, and excellence, than all the subtle or fanciful speculations of Pythagoreans and Eclectics, Academics and Peripatetics, Cynics and Stoics, Epicureans and Sceptics, or of all the sects of all antiquity; and that their physical philosophy has vanished before the light of modern investigation and experiment. But the detail is curious as evidence of the extraordinary application, and yet limited powers of the human mind applied to such a subject, when destitute of the lights of Revelation. For here we see the intense meditation, the laborious devotion, the sacrifice of all other earthly considerations to this one pursuit, by the most refined and acute intellects of the most enlightened countries for more than a thousand years, exerted in a fruitless search for an unobjectionable system of morals, which Scripture reveals to us in a small space and in the simplest forms.

The original seems to be rendered with characteristic spirit, though from inadvertence either in author or translator not free from errors; thus speaking of the peripatetic system we are told, "From the death of its author in the first century in the Christian era, this philosophy was but little regarded," whereas Aristotle died above three centuries before Christ.

For this he appears to have received by the following account, in his own hand-writing, rendered to Newbery, twenty pounds; and for another short piece, known only by this memorandum to be from his pen, the Preface to Wiseman's Grammar, two guineas.

The "Natural Philosophy" is no doubt the first volume of the work already mentioned, published ten years afterward.

<i>" Mr. Newbery Dr.</i>					
Brookes's 4 vols. correcting	-	-	-	-	£21 0 0
Natural Philosophy	-	-	-	-	63 0 0
Traveller	-	-	-	-	21 0 0
Translation of Philosophy	-	-	-	-	20 0 0
Preface to Wiseman's Grammar	-	-	-	-	2 2 0
					<hr/> £127 2 0 <hr/>

" June 7, 1766.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

In the summer of this year he first seriously contemplated writing for the stage. One of the inducements to this may have been the success of many of his countrymen, living and dead, as dramatists; of Southerne, Farquhar, A. Phillips, and Sir Richard Steele; of Bickerstaffe, Murphy, Brooke, and Henry Jones, besides the witty but loose Mrs. Centlivre. But from the period of settling in London, the theatres, managers, performers, and the state of dramatic literature generally, as they contributed to his amusement occupied much of his attention and sometimes his pen. To a literary man, more especially a poet, destitute of domestic ties and thrown loosely upon the surface of society in the metropolis, the theatre was then an object of primary interest. Many appear to have thought the production of a play necessary in order to establish their reputation in polite letters; the emolument likewise attending upon success was then considerable; and to a poor and ambitious man the temptation at once of profit and honour was irresistible. He had formed an intimacy with some of the principal performers, more particularly Barry, Woodward, Shuter, Quick, and Mr. and Mrs. Yates at whose house he was a frequent visiter; and a favourable moment seemed only wanting to try his powers in this new though precarious department of writing. That he was revolving this project in the previous March, seems probable from a conversation with Dr. Johnson, mentioned by Boswell, though no hint appears to have been dropped at the moment of his purpose.

"I think, Mr. Johnson," said Goldsmith, "you don't go near the theatres now. You give yourself no more concern about a new play, than if you had never had any thing to do with the stage." "Why Sir," was the reply, "our tastes greatly alter. The lad does not care for the child's rattle, and the old man does not care for the young man's prostitute." "Nay, Sir," rejoined Goldsmith, "but your muse was not a prostitute." "Sir, I do not think she was," returned Johnson; and some further observations ensued, Goldsmith insisting "they had a claim upon him," and the moralist maintaining he had done enough.

When preparing the outline of his play, he undertook in September one of those compilations for the booksellers, which requiring little time, and a moderate portion of taste for its arrangement, he

familiarly termed "building a book." This was a duodecimo volume—"Poems for Young Ladies. In Three Parts: Devotional, Moral, and Entertaining: The whole being a collection of the best pieces in our language." The first announcement took place early in October, although not published for two months afterward;* and to some of the advertisements were affixed the following lines, which we are probably to understand rather as the recommendation of the bookseller, than the product of Goldsmith's muse—

"External graces all decay,
Their power is quickly past,
A well-formed mind extends their sway,
And bids each beauty last."

The devotional part contains Boyce's Deity; the morning Hymn of Adam from *Paradise Lost*; Pope's Messiah and Universal Prayer; the first and third of the Night Thoughts; three Hymns of Addison; and the first book of Ogilvie's Day of Judgment. The Moral: his own ballad of Edwin and Angelina; three fables of Moore; the story of Lavinia from the Seasons; Advice to a Lady by the Hon. Mr. N—— (Nugent); Fairy Tale and Night Piece on Death, by Parnell. The Entertaining division, has the parting of Hector and Andromache from the *Iliad*; the Death of Dido from the *Æneid*; the stories of Narcissus, and of Ceyx and Alcyone, from Ovid; Baucis and Philemon, by Swift; Teribazus and Ariana, by Glover; Marriage, by Dr. Cotton; the Fan, by Gay; a Winter Piece, by Philips; two short pieces by Waller; Collins's Oriental Eclogues; and Addison's Letter from Italy.

For this selection, which is unobjectionable and to which he gave a preface but in the first instance not his name, credit is claimed. "Care has been taken to select not only such pieces as innocence may read without a blush, but such as will even tend to strengthen that innocence. In this little work a lady may find the most exquisite pleasure, while she is at the same time learning the duties of life; and while she courts only entertainment, be deceived into wisdom."

By a memorandum in the possession of the writer, the sum obtained for it from Payne in Paternoster Row, was ten guineas; enough perhaps as literature was then rewarded, for the labour. But as compilations derive their chief credit from the editor, his name in the title-page would have been worth double that sum to the publisher, who had additional interest in its success from having brought out in the preceding May, Fordyce's Sermons to Young Women, the success of which work as the preface avows, gave birth to the compilation. A third edition, according to the title-page, was printed in 1770 by a different publisher where his name appears at length, probably without his sanction. "By Dr. Goldsmith, Author of the Traveller."

Shortly after its publication he was visited by Mr. Hoole, the well-known translator of Tasso and Ariosto, who carried with him on a

* St. James's Chronicle, December 12—15, 1766.—Lloyd's Evening Post.—Gazetteer.—It was erroneously stated by Bishop Percy to be printed in 1767.

visit to the Poet, his son, now the Rev. Samuel Hoole of Poplar, who though then very young, perfectly remembers the circumstances of the interview. Goldsmith being in good humour, and willing as usual, to court intimacy with juvenile visitors, after a playful and bantering address and some jocular admonitions, presented him with this little volume of poems, which was long retained as a memorial of the giver. His face, person, and manner, in consequence of being a frequent visitor at the house of Mr. Hoole, are still fresh in the recollection of the survivor, although time has swept from memory nearly all that personal anecdote which contemporaries supply, and of which he once heard much.

One remark of Dr. Johnson on Goldsmith is still retained by this gentleman. The former having been taken up by Mr. and Mrs. Hoole to accompany them to a dinner party, proved as usual dilatory in dressing, and to make up for the delay, the coachman was ordered to drive fast. Johnson who delighted in rapidity of pace and had been speaking of Goldsmith whom they expected to meet, put his head out of one of the windows to see they were going right, and rubbing his hands with an air of satisfaction exclaimed—"This man drives fast and well; were Goldsmith here now he would tell us he could do better."

Another anecdote of about this period indicative of his habitual attention to children, is stated on the authority of the late Mr. Charles Lamb. The first instructress of that gentleman in the rudiments of letters, a Mrs. Reynolds, used to relate that when little more than a child she resided in a house where Goldsmith occasionally visited, and on his entrance on one occasion he found her reading one of his volumes, it is believed the poems for young ladies. Patting her on the head and applauding her occupation, he said she should have something more when that was finished, and soon afterwards sent a present of one of his own poems.

Whatever credit accrued from the preceding compilation, was lost by another of a similar kind in two volumes which appeared in April 1767, with his name affixed. "The Beauties of English Poesy. Selected by Oliver Goldsmith."

In this were inconsiderately included two indelicate tales of Prior, unfit for the class of readers for whom the volumes were intended; an indiscretion so obvious that many disposed to think favourably of his judgment, fancied they had been introduced by mistake, though from the introductory remarks such appears not to have been the case. In extenuation of his fault it must be remembered that Dr. Johnson, whose opinion probably influenced him, maintained that Prior might be read by the modest and the delicate. The error however proved a bar to the complete success of the work, though otherwise comprising many of the shorter and more beautiful pieces of our poetry.

In the first volume are the Rape of the Lock, the Hermit (by Parnell,) Il Penseroso, L'Allegro, Gray's Elegy, London (by Johnson,) The School-mistress, Cooper's Hill, Eloisa to Abelard, Epistle to Lord Dorset by Philips, Addison's Letter from Italy, Odes to St.

Cecilia's Day by Dryden and Pope, The Shepherd's Week, Mac Flecknoe, Swift's Rhapsody on Poetry, On the Use of Riches, Sixth Canto of the Dispensary, Oriental Eclogues, Splendid Shilling, Pipe of Tobacco.

In the second we find Night Piece on Death and Fairy Tales (by Parnell,) Palemon and Lavinia, The Bastard, The Poet and his Patron, The Wolf, Sheep, and Lamb, The Female Seducers, Epistles to a Lady (by Mr. Nugent, already mentioned,) Hans Carvel, The Ladle, Baucis and Philemon, On the Death of Addison, and Colin and Lucy (by Tickell,) The Tears of Scotland (by Smollett,) On the Death of Cromwell (by Waller,) Phœbus and Daphne, Night Thoughts first and second, with the First Satire (by Young,) Pastoral Ballads (by Shenstone,) Phœbe (by Dr. Byrom,) Song by Rowe, Essay on Poetry (by the Duke of Buckingham,) Cadenus and Vanessa, and Alma, or the Progress of the Mind.

Two hundred pounds were said to be the price of this compilation, and the use of his name in the title-page, to Griffin the publisher; an exaggeration which though not circulated by himself, he took no pains, as in other instances of reputed large sums, to contradict. A more moderate estimate makes it fifty pounds; for excepting a preface and a few remarks prefixed to each piece, the remainder became an exercise of critical taste, which no doubt like other qualities of authorship deserves its reward. When the magnitude of the sum was mentioned, his usual reply in substance was: "Why, sir, it may seem large; but then a man may be many years working in obscurity before his taste and reputation are fixed, or estimated, and then he is, as in other professions, only paid for his previous labours."

Shortly before this, he had been occupied on another compilation of a graver and more useful description, intended however for the same class of readers. From poetry to matter of fact, the transition, as appears by the following acknowledgment, was sufficiently rapid:—

"Received from Mr. Newbery five guineas for writing a short English Grammar.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"December 28, 1766."

Another memorandum soon afterward in the same papers, exhibits him as borrower of a small sum.

"*Doctor Goldsmith* Dr.

"To Cash lent January 6, 1767 - - - - £1 1 0"

A third account of the same publisher at this time is the restatement of a few of the sums paid for works already mentioned, with an intimation not seemingly verified by subsequent papers, that a settlement had taken place shortly before.

"J. N.

To Dr. Goldsmith.

Writing Natural Philosophy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	£63	0	0
The Traveller	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	21	0	0
The Translation of Philosophy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	0	0
Correcting 4 vols. Brookes's	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	21	0	0
Preface to the History of the World	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	0
Preface to Wiseman's Grammar	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	0

The last settlement was the 11th of October, 1766.

Query—Whether the money had at the Society was	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	£4	4	0.
Paid for Copy of the Essays	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	£10	10	0"

In April 1767 came out from Newbery and passed to a second edition, "A Voyage round the World in his Majesty's Ship the Dolphin, commanded by the Hon. Commodore Byron." In this, Goldsmith was supposed (by Mr. English) to have had a share, either by revising, or putting it into some degree of shape for the literary market, from blotted loose sheets having been seen in his rooms; but perusal of the work renders this improbable, as the style and descriptions bear no traces of his skill. The name of the author, though said to be an officer of the ship, was suppressed, and an exaggerated account of the size of the people of Patagonia occasioning some ridicule in the newspapers, and ultimately a denial from the officers that it came from any of their number, the publisher replied in a long advertisement reasserting his original statement. Goldsmith though he may have contributed little, if any, assistance to the writer, at least knew him, as appears by a passage in *Animated Nature* when speaking of the various races of men.

"The last voyager we have had, that has seen this enormous race is Commodore Byron. I have talked with the person who first gave the relation of that voyage, and who was carpenter of the Commodore's ship, he was a sensible, understanding man, and I believe extremely faithful. By him, therefore, I was assured, in the most solemn manner, of the truth of his relation; and this account has since been confirmed by one or two publications; in all which, the particulars are pretty nearly the same."*

His name being now considered among booksellers a kind of passport to public favour, was at this time used to aid the sale of a re-issue of Blainville's *Travels*, which drew forth a variety of remarks in the daily journals,† where however an error which he fell into

* *Animated Nature*, vol. ii. p. 261. 8vo. Lond. 1774.

† Besides other letters the following appeared in the *St. James's Chronicle*, May 12—14, 1767.

"SIR,

"In this age of literary curiosity, not content with the real merit of authors living or dead, or with such compilations as they can pass upon the eager public even without any author's name at all, our publishers have recourse to a new artifice, borrowing the recommendation of some person eminent in the republic of letters, after first imposing on him.

"This must be the case with regard to the new edition of Blainville's *Travels* now publishing in weekly numbers: Dr. Goldsmith is made to say in recommenda-

was treated with consideration. It appeared they had been published several years before without success, and the proprietors desirous of trying the public taste again in the form of weekly numbers, attached a recommendation by Goldsmith to the advertisements, seeming to speak of it as coming out then for the first time. Of the artifice used it appears he was ignorant. His reply frankly acknowledging the mistake, appears in the letter given in a preceding page, vindicating the originality of Edwin and Angelina.

The interview in the early part of this year, of Dr. Johnson with the King in the library of Buckingham House, occasioned much conversation in literary circles, and when Johnson was solicited to repeat the particulars at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, Goldsmith we are told, was observed to be silent and inattentive.

Boswell attributes this in his usual way, to envy and chagrin at the honour conferred on a brother author; but adds in something of a better spirit, "At length the frankness and simplicity of his natural character prevailed. He sprung from the sofa, advanced to Johnson, and in a kind of flutter from imagining himself in the situation which he had just been hearing described, exclaimed; 'Well, you acquitted yourself in this conversation better than I should have done; for I should have bowed and stammered through the whole of it.'"

This very natural and true picture of his diffidence, to which there are several allusions in his writings, was nevertheless conjoined with perfect consciousness of desert. Modesty, and justifiable pride, are not always so widely separated as they seem; both may be tenants of the same breast. The contrast of his own situation, poor, and as he considered neglected, and with that of his friend, enjoying not only the bounty but the conversation of his Sovereign, may have given birth to a momentary feeling of dissatisfaction, just as Johnson is supposed to have felt, although disclaiming the feeling in a Latin sentence, on first viewing Burke's handsome residence at Beaconsfield, "*Non equidem invideo; miror magis.*" It would be harsh to designate the emotions of either on the success of their friends by the term envy; the reason assigned by Goldsmith for his apparent inattention, that he feared Johnson had relinquished the design of furnishing a prologue to his play, may have been true; it is certain he had made such a request some time before, and while in expectation

tion of it—"I am told they are now first translated from the author's MS. in the French language, which has never yet been published." Allow me by your means to inform the Doctor that I have read a printed translation of them in three volumes quarto, made about that time; and that the truth is, the republishers have now first drawn out of an old warehouse a number of copies thrust there for want of a quick sale. I mean not to disparage Mr. Blainville's work; but hope you will join with me in this sacrifice to truth, as I have too much respect for Dr. Goldsmith to suffer him to authorize so pitiful an artifice. I am, Sir, yours, &c.

"D. H."

Another correspondent, a Mr. Turnbull, likewise writes on the subject of the error committed by the "ingenious Dr. Goldsmith."

of a favour from him was not likely to evince in his presence, discourtesy or envy.

That his fits of abstraction were neither unusual nor slight, we have ample evidence. The following remarkable instance which occurred some time afterward, was related to Dr. Percy with some humour by the Duchess of Northumberland.

During one of the annual excursions of this noble family to Bath, they occupied a house on one of the parades next door to Lord Clare, with whom Goldsmith was on a visit. Whilst preparing one morning to sit down to breakfast, the Duke and Duchess were surprised by the entrance of the Poet, who was well known to both, into the dining-room, when he flung himself on a sofa in a manner the most unconcerned. Suspecting some mistake though too well bred to hint at the visit being unexpected, they entered into conversation on the topics of the place, desirous of displaying as little embarrassment as their visiter, till breakfast being served up, they requested him to stay and partake of it. The invitation dissipated his revery; he declared he thought he had been in the house of his friend Lord Nugent, and in much confusion hastily withdrew; but not till they had good-naturedly exacted a promise that he should give them his company to dinner.

He had been now resident for a considerable time in the Temple, a favourite abode then, as it appears, of several men of letters, among whom were Francis, the translator of Horace, Fawkes, already mentioned, Bickerstaffe, Kelly, Woty, Elphinston (author of a forgotten poem on education,) and Dr. Arne, who by his proficiency in a sister art, and as author of a drama, "The Guardian Outwitted," claimed affinity with poets. The first apartments of Goldsmith were on the library staircase, now pulled down and on the site of which stands No. 2, Garden Court, being then an inmate with the butler of the Society, named Jeffs. Afterwards he removed to the King's Bench Walk. No record of his occupation in either place exists in the books of the society, and the rooms therefore were doubtless rented from a private owner.

Here he was visited by Dr. Johnson, who prying round the room with that earnestness characteristic of near-sighted persons, Goldsmith's pride took the alarm, suspecting the motive to be to observe whatever was defective in elegance or in comfort, and he immediately said; "I shall soon be in better chambers than these." The moralist gently rebuked this ambition by paying him a most flattering compliment, implying that a man of his reputation need care little for external distinctions. "Nay, Sir, never mind that; '*Nil te quæsieris extra.*'" Such was the conviction and practice of Johnson himself; for Miss Reynolds tells us, though perhaps with some little exaggeration, that previous to the grant of his pension he was liable to be mistaken, in dress at least, for a beggarman.

The final remove of Goldsmith took place not long afterward to the second floor, not the first as Bishop Percy erroneously states, of No. 2, Brick Court; his rooms were on the right hand ascending the staircase, consisting of three apartments sufficiently airy and plea-

sant, where the views towards the gardens supplied him with an observation given in *Animated Nature*, respecting the natural history of Rooks:—"I have often amused myself with observing their plan of policy from my window in the Temple, that looks upon a grove where they have made a colony in the midst of the city. At the commencement of spring the rookery which during the continuance of winter seemed to have been deserted, or only guarded by about five or six, like old soldiers in a garrison, now begins to be once more frequented; and in a short time all the bustle and hurry of business will be fairly commenced."*

These chambers were likewise private property; and his name therefore appears no where as tenant to the members of this Inn of Court. By means of advances from booksellers and from private friends, he furnished them in an expensive manner, to the amount it is said, though this no doubt included either the purchase or a lease of the rooms, of four hundred pounds; an imprudence which added to an increasing turn for expense, involved him in difficulties he never surmounted, and is said to have embittered the last hours of his life. About twenty years after his death they became the scene of a tragical adventure, by a Miss Broderick shooting a Mr. Eddington with whom she had formerly lived, and who took this desperate means of punishing his desertion. Among the friends who assisted him with the loan of money, was Mr. Edmund Bott, a barrister, author of a work on the Poor Laws, said to be revised in its style and arrangement by Goldsmith, and afterwards edited, with additions, by the venerable Chairman of the Middlesex Quarter Sessions who had also some slight knowledge of the Poet.† Mr. Bott lived in the opposite rooms on the same floor, enjoyed much of his regard, was a frequent companion in amusement, and at the death of the latter became, as his chief creditor, the possessor of his papers. Below Goldsmith, on the first floor, and where some of his works are said to have been written, was Sir William Blackstone. He was succeeded by Mr. Children, father of the present Secretary of the Royal Society, who occasionally amused his friends with details of the visitors and parties, sometimes neither very early nor regular, of the sociable poet.

One of the persons resident in the Temple admitted to considerable intimacy with him, was Mr. William Cooke, a barrister, known as the writer of a work on dramatic genius, and of a poem from the title of which he was frequently termed "*Conversation Cooke*." He had arrived about this time from Ireland, to pass the customary term in an Inn of Court in London, recommended to Goldsmith by his old friend Dr. Sleigh of Cork. He was fond of the theatre, social in his habits, and settling in the English metropolis, became known among its clubs and societies as more devoted to letters than to law; he related many amusing anecdotes of the Poet from personal knowledge, sufficiently marking his simplicity and general benevolence of conduct.

* *Animated Nature*, vol. v. p. 231, 232. 8vo. 1774.

† Mr. Const.

To this gentleman, while yet but a stranger in town and his supplies occasionally short, Goldsmith had more than once offered the use of his purse, which Cooke at length accepted, the temptation of an evening at Marylebone or Ranelagh Gardens with several companions being irresistible; although at the moment destitute of necessary funds for the occasion. On applying to the Poet however he was told very seriously and no doubt truly, that he had not a guinea in his possession. This being considered an evasion, something like a reproach escaped the applicant, that he regretted having made such a request where notwithstanding voluntary offers of assistance there existed so little disposition to afford it. Nettled by the remark, Goldsmith as evidence of his desire to oblige, borrowed the money. In the mean time Cooke provided from another quarter, had locked his chambers and proceeded to his amusement, but returning at an early hour in the morning, found a difficulty in opening the door, which on examination proved to arise from the sum he had requested, in silver, being wrapped in paper and thrust underneath. On being thanked for this proof of sincerity on the following day, but told that the money might as readily have fallen into strange hands as of him for whom it was meant, he characteristically replied "In truth my dear fellow I did not think of that."*

On another occasion, entering a coffee-house near Temple Bar, hungry and fatigued from a journey, and ordering supper, it was no sooner brought in than by a jocular scheme, promptly but quietly devised by several of his acquaintance present, such significant looks and gestures were displayed as to lead to the belief that something was wrong; and on pressing for an explanation, the dish was pronounced to have an unsavoury odour and unfit to be eaten. Thrown off his guard by the seeming gravity of the decision, it was sent away; while a hint to the waiter from the party practising the jest, silenced his replies to the reproaches of the disappointed guest, who by several other tricks dexterously played off, was compelled to wait to a late hour for his repast.

To these may be added another of later date, known also to a contemporary still living, who was then an occasional visitor at the house where it occurred.

The Poet belonged to a card club that assembled at the Devil Tavern near Temple Bar, and having dined on the day of its meeting with Davies the bookseller in Covent Garden, took a hackney coach to his evening destination, paying the driver by mistake with a guinea instead of a shilling. Discovering the blunder when in the room, he mentioned it to those present with the remark, that as there was little honesty among such persons, he had no expectation of recovering it. On the next evening of meeting while full of good humour and hilarity, he was summoned by a message down stairs, when a person, seemingly a coachman, after a plausible excuse for not discovering and rectifying the error at the moment, begged to return

* This story was corroborated to the writer by the late Richard Sharpe, Esq. to whom Mr. Cooke told it more than once.

the guinea which no doubt had been unintentionally given him the preceding week. The Doctor delighted with the occurrence, returned to the company extolling such an unusual instance of honesty, and proposing some token of reward; "for in truth," he added, "the honest man deserves it." A small sum was raised, with which he returned to the coachman and dismissed him. But some one desiring to see the returned guinea, it was discovered, as may be anticipated, to be a counterfeit, when an explosion of mirth succeeded which so disconcerted him, that an early opportunity was taken of quitting the house. It is scarcely necessary to add that the scene was got up in the spirit of tavern waggery, a man being employed by the company to personate the coachman.

The same good nature, unwilling to return a negative to any request, and even his professional character of author though so rarely the owner of wealth, subjected him to deceptions of a graver kind from persons professing the cultivation of letters.

Among these was a foreigner at this time in London, countenanced by the Bavarian Ambassador and others, under the name of Colonel Chevalier de Champigny, soliciting subscriptions for a History of England in French, partly translated and partly original, to be comprised in fifteen volumes at the price of seven guineas and a half, to be paid in advance. The roll of names in his subscription list which was frequently advertised in 1766,* comprised crowned heads, ambassadors, and many other persons of rank. Among these Goldsmith was solicited to be one; the honour of participating in the patronage bestowed by such persons was not to be resisted; and although long familiar with the tricks of adventurers in subscriptions, he paid the whole of the money at a time when perhaps he had not another guinea at his disposal.

Another claim upon his scanty resources occurred some time afterward by the arrival in London of his nephew, Mr. William Hodson, the son of his elder sister, whose spirit displayed something of the eccentricity of the family.

He was educated by his uncle the Rev. Henry Goldsmith, and entered Trinity College Dublin in February 1762.† Participating in some irregularities here towards the conclusion of his term, and unwilling to encounter parental reproach, or as some relatives assert, desirous like his uncle Oliver of seeing the world, he set out without intimating his design to any one, to pay him a visit in London, and for a time acted there as his amanuensis. Becoming tired of this

* These, occupying half a column of a newspaper, are too tedious to be transcribed. Another production of this person was advertised soon afterwards.—

"Supplement to the Ministry of Mr. Pitt, with an exact recapitulation of the entire conduct of that sage Politician from the 5th September 1761 when he quitted the Ministry, to the 30th July 1766 when he was created Earl of Chatham, &c. By the Chevalier Colonel Champigny (8vo. 6s.) Williams." This was said likewise to be in French and printed at Cologne.

† The entry is, contrary to the usual practice, in English; and the name erroneously spelt, as is common in their own neighbourhood. "*William Hudson Pens. admitted into College Feb. 1st, 1762.—Schoolmaster Mr. Goldsmith.—Tutor Dr. Hudson.*"

occupation, he wished to go abroad, but the means were wanting; and having no taste to follow the example of his uncle by travelling the continent of Europe on foot, another project was adopted of securing a still wider sphere of observation without the necessity of incurring expense. While in Dublin he had attended anatomical lectures, induced by curiosity or desire to follow the profession of physic, though the paternal estate was sufficient in those days and on the borders of Connaught, to keep an Irish gentleman (and Irish gentlemen are said to have no taste for steady industry) from the exercise of professional occupation. The knowledge thus acquired was now turned to account; he embarked in a medical capacity in an Indiaman, made a voyage to China, and by his own account was fortunate enough while the ship remained in that country, to cure the child of an opulent Chinese of a dangerous complaint, for which among other proofs of gratitude, he received a present of a small dinner service of porcelain, part of which was shown to the writer in the family of one of his descendants. A more curious circumstance, the truth of which is attested by his daughter and others, occurred on his return to London. Having formerly incurred pecuniary obligation to one of his college friends, a Mr. Cowan, member of a respectable family in the county of Donegal, it was reclaimed on their meeting in England; but Hodson being at the moment without money, offered in discharge of the debt a lottery ticket, which was accepted. To the surprise of both parties and the mortification of the original holder, it turned up a prize of twenty thousand pounds. No portion of this large sum was it is said given him, neither did it materially benefit the receiver, who having spent part of it in a county election lost his life afterwards by the upsetting of a boat on one of the lakes in Ireland.

It is believed he made a second, if not third, voyage to India, being for a few years found occasionally resident in London, where probably he practised professionally, as Mr. Cradock states in his memoirs, that Oliver some time before his death had a nephew, an apothecary residing in Newman Street. This seems so far correct, that in the tailor's account book for 1770 and 1772, more than fifty pounds charged to Hr. Hodson, "of No. 41. Newman Street," were afterwards put down to the account of his uncle, who by the same memorandum seems to have made himself accountable for apparel supplied to others. Succeeding some years afterwards to the paternal estate, he led the life of a country gentleman, his medical skill being frequently called into gratuitous exercise by the neighbouring peasantry; occasionally for health or amusement he made excursions to Portugal; was twice married; first to Miss Longworth of Creggan in Westmeath, by whom he left issue three sons and two daughters; and again to Miss Isdell, a distant relative, by whom he had two daughters.*

* The sons (in order to satisfy some curiosity regarding this branch of the family) were Daniel, Oliver Goldsmith, and George Longworth Hodson, of whom the second survives, occupying the family property near Athlone. The daughters were Elizabeth married to the Rev. Alexander Gunning of Alicant near Castle-Blakeney, in

Mr. Hodson received credit for the possession of talents, and appears to have exercised them occasionally in poetry; one of his productions has been communicated by the Rev. John Graham, who received it from one of his daughters, and which is subjoined.* He was no great master in the art, though some of the allusions seeming to come from the heart, possess pathos; that to his uncle, if not happily introduced or so well expressed as might be wished, is not devoid of interest. The scenery described is that which adjoins the family residence, named St. John's, near Athlone.

Galaway, and Catherine married to Mr. George Mechem of Athlone. By his second wife the daughters were, Jane, married to Mr. Maurice Neligan of Bellmount near Navan; and Anne, still living, widow of Mr. Edward Denniston of Coxheath, formerly Captain in the Donnegal Militia.

* STANZAS.

By the late William Hodson, Esq.

OF ST. JOHN'S, NEAR ATHLONE.

"Stern winter's rage the field deforms,
And strips the trees of green,
Its howling winds, its rustling storms,
Now sadden every scene.
Or now its gurgling torrents flow,
And swell th' extended lake,
Or battering hail, and driving snow,
Wild devastations make.

"On yon known hill forlorn I stand,
Where oft I've stood before,
And pensive view my native land,
Its lake and winding shore.
Where yonder turrets meet my view,
Now mouldering to decay,
If legendary tales be true,
An ancient city lay.

[Here two Stanzas intervened which were forgotten by the reciter.]

"And there embosom'd in the grove,
Fast by yon watery waste,
Late the retreat of peace and love,
My mouldering mansion's placed.
The ruin'd church with ivy crown'd,
Marks to my streaming eye,
'The hallow'd, venerable ground,
Where my dear kindred lie.

"There lie the relics of a sire,
Compassionate and just,
Whom my sad eyes beheld expire,
And mingle with the dust.
A sister too whose spotless life
Was like the clear noon day,
Bless'd as a daughter, mother, wife,
Untimely snatch'd away.

CHAPTER XVII.

Negotiation with Garrick.—Historical Writing.—Mr. Roach.—Good-natured Man.
—Hugh Kelly.—Country Excursions.—Dr. Glover.

IN the spring of 1767, his play, to the completion of which some anxious months had been devoted, was finished; but the greater difficulty remained to introduce it to the stage.

There are perhaps few writers of lively imagination and versatile powers who have not at some period of their lives wished to write for the theatre, influenced by the variety of excitements which commonly attend its representations. A successful dramatist if shorn of some former honours in our own days, still occupies a large space in the public eye, his reputation spreads more rapidly than that of any other writer, and his name, which is frequently bandied with a familiarity implying regard, forms a passport to the favour of that large class of society, who in a great metropolis find in the amusements of the theatre relaxation from the cares of life. He identifies himself not merely with the literature but with the enjoyments of the people; with one of the most social, and certainly not least intellectual, of their recreations. Like the orator, he has the gratification of witnessing his own triumphs; of seeing in the plaudits, tears, or smiles of delighted spectators, the strongest testimony to his own

“And there beneath the lime-tree shade,
The cold turf on her breast,
Are a loved wife’s sad ashes laid,
And there my own shall rest.
Her beauteous form consign’d to earth,
That form which charm’d each eye,
Her innocence and modest worth
Have sought their kindred sky.

“*But buried in a foreign land,
The tuneful Goldsmith lies,
No kinsman grasp’d his stiffening hand,
Or closed his dying eyes.
Consign’d to death that levels all,
My uncle met his doom,
And BURKE and REYNOLDS wept his fall,
And JOHNSON grav’d his tomb.* >

“As nipping frost in luckless hour,
Oft blights the blooming rose,
While many a weed and baneful flower,
Beneath its influence grows.
When thoughts like these invade my mind,
As winter’s rage assails,
Or what are clouds or howling winds,
To what my bosom feels!”

powers. The author of a good book hears of his success, but the writer of a good play may night after night witness it.

On the other hand, the discouragements are of a serious description; so great as to cause wonder how such as possess reputation in another department of writing can commit it to the caprice of managers, actors, and audiences; and the risks they must necessarily run, has kept many proud or sensitive minds not otherwise indisposed to dramatic composition, from trusting their labours to the stage. The composition of a good play we know is no ordinary effort of mind; its requisites of plot, incident, character and dialogue, their combinations and developements so as to produce an agreeable whole, require genius of a high and varied order. When the piece is completed, interest is commonly necessary to secure its representation. Friends for this purpose are to be sought, especially by such as are poor and unknown. The private judgment of the manager may be unfavourable, or the actors dissatisfied with their parts; alterations are suggested in order to satisfy caprice or unreasonable pretension, which sometimes have the effect either of obscuring the author's original design, or impairing his sense. The delay of months or seasons in bringing it forward even when all other obstacles are surmounted; the annoyance of being brought forward at a late or unfavourable period of the season; the chance of being finally rejected by the audience, often as capricious and uncertain as either manager or performers, but from whom there lies no appeal; the consequent extinction of all hopes of fame or profit, the annoyance of having taxed his ingenuity in vain, and the mortification, if not ridicule, consequent upon ill success—these form very solid reasons for men of high reach of mind frequently declining to write for the stage.

All these obstacles were very well known to Goldsmith, but some he fancied might be obviated by his reputation, and others by personal knowledge of theatrical persons. It serves to heighten our dislike to embark labour and genius in such a calling, to know that however popular as a poet, though familiar with the tastes of the town, and well acquainted with the manager of at least one of the theatres, besides being introduced by friends of influence and celebrity to another, he was fated to experience them all.

His first interview with Garrick some years before, led, as may be supposed, to no further intercourse, but his interests rendering such an acquaintance now desirable, Sir Joshua Reynolds, by a letter still in existence, appears to have brought them together. Goldsmith wished to have the manager's opinion of his play; the latter at the first glance is said to have approved it, but in his usual manner, took care not to express himself so frankly as to be unable to retreat from any rash inferences of the author of receiving it for representation. This habitual indecision gave rise to frequent charges against him of insincerity by the dramatists of the day; Murphy and Bickerstaffe were sometimes loud in his condemnation; and Goldsmith heard enough to believe that less was to be expected from the civilities of the manager, than from what he believed his

own reputation and the influence of literary friends. From the first therefore, without wholly disregarding Drury Lane, it is certain he contemplated Covent Garden Theatre as more likely to prove favourable to his views.

That no reasonable precaution should be neglected in case of being refused at one house, it was however submitted to Garrick in form for his stage, and the result turned out as had been anticipated. He at first hesitated to give so decided an opinion to the author as to his friends, for Reynolds and Johnson were soon told it would not succeed in representation. In one of the interviews succeeding this communication of his sentiments, Garrick after some discussion, finally offered to submit the piece to Mr. Whitehead, which Goldsmith thought proper to decline, believing that its condemnation was already resolved upon in that quarter; another person of no critical or dramatic note was then named, at which the Poet exhibited some warmth, influenced by an impression that the friends of the manager had been canvassed for unfavourable opinions of his play. In this temper they parted, when in a few weeks Garrick, who had proceeded to his native city, received the following letter, which makes the withdrawal of the piece rather the act of the author than direct rejection on his part. Traces of wounded feeling are obvious in the disappointed author; but we must fairly attribute them as much to the vexations occasioned by pecuniary embarrassment as to the offended pride of authorship: for by several notes written about this time, which have been seen by the writer, he was urgently in want of money. The conviction therefore that at least one channel of probable relief was closed against him, sufficiently explains his dissatisfaction.

London, July 20, 1767.

“SIR,

“A few days ago Mr. Beard renewed his claim to the piece which I had written for his stage, and had as a friend submitted to your perusal. As I found you had very great difficulties about that piece, I complied with his desire, thinking it wrong to take up the attention of my friends with such petty concerns as mine, or to load your good nature by a compliance rather with their requests than my merits. I am extremely sorry that you should think me warm at our last meeting; your judgment certainly ought to be free, especially in a matter which must in some measure concern your own credit and interest. I assure you, Sir, I have no disposition to differ with you on this or any other account, but am with an high opinion of your abilities and with a very real esteem, Sir,

“Your most obedient humble servant,

“OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”

“To David Garrick, Esq., at Litchfield.”

To this the following reply was promptly returned —

“Litchfield, July 25, 1767.

“SIR,

“I was at Birmingham when your letter came to this place, or I

should have answered and thanked you for it immediately. I was indeed much hurt that your warmth at our last meeting mistook my sincere and friendly attention to your play for the remains of a former misunderstanding which I had as much forgot as if it never had existed. What I said to you at my own house I now repeat, that I felt more pain in giving my sentiments than you possibly would in receiving them. It has been the business, and ever will be, of my life, to live on the best terms with men of genius, and I know that Dr. Goldsmith will have no reason to change his previous friendly disposition towards me, as I shall be glad of every future opportunity to convince him how much I am

“His obedient servant and well-wisher,
“D. GARRICK,”*

The play was therefore withdrawn to try its fortune at Covent Garden.

A memorandum of Newbery about this time, points to compilations in which Goldsmith appears to have been engaged, though after diligent search no trace of these works, or more certain information on the matter, has been gained. By this it appears that the promissory note of 1763 remained still unpaid.

“1764, Oct. 29.

Dr. Goldsmith on account of				
	English Lives	-	-	£ 8 8 0
	Taylor's Works	-	-	0 12 0
1765. Sept. 12th.	For half the copy of Essays	-	-	10 10 0
1767. July 13th.	For British Empire	-	-	10 0 0
	Promissory note. Oct. 11th, 1763.	-	-	48 1 6
	Ditto July 7th, 1767	-	-	10 0 0
	£ 87...11...6”			

Part of the summer (1767) he resided at Islington, occupying apartments as traditionary accounts state, in the old turret of Canonbury house, in which it appears several literary men, publishers, and printers, his friend Newbery for one, had at various times fixed their abode.† Here he had as visitors or resident acquaintance, be-

* Communicated by — Smith, Esq.

† Humphreys, author of “Canons, a Poem,” “Ulysses, an Opera,” &c. &c.; Chambers, editor of the Cyclopædia; Smart, the poet; and several others of minor note.

“Here Humphreys breath’d his last, the muse’s friend,
And Chambers found his mighty labours end.”

“See on the distant slope, majestic shows
Old Canonbury’s tower, an ancient pile
To various fates assign’d; and where by turns
Meanness and grandeur have alternate reign’d
Thither, in latter days, hath genius fled
From yonder city, to respire and die.
There the sweet Bard of Auburn sat, and tuned
The plaintive moanings of his village dirge.
There learned Chambers treasured lore for *men*
And Newbery there his A B C’s for *babes*.”

sides others whose names are forgotten, the Rev. Mr. Rider, the Rev. Mr. Sellon, known for eccentricity and absence of mind, and who in consequence became the subject of many jocular tricks, Beaufort, editor of the *Town and Country Magazine*, Woty, Huddeston Wynne, Mr. Robinson the publisher, Mr. Hamilton and Mr. William Baker, printers. The Crown Tavern, in the lower road, formed the scene of many of their social dinners, and Goldsmith, according to accounts furnished by surviving relatives of some of these parties, was not the least convivial.

It was stated by Isaac Reed, and by Seward, the friend of Johnson and the Thrales and author of some volumes of anecdotes, that in this year he attempted to secure some more certain provision than literature afforded, by becoming a candidate for the Gresham lectureship on Civil Law, vacant by the death of Mr. William Mace. No trace of his application with this view is extant, as appears by reference to the proper authority.* He found perhaps on inquiry, as in the case of the Secretaryship to the Society of Arts, that private influence which commonly determines such appointments, rendered the chance of success small, and therefore decided him not to risk a repulse by the ballot. Genius is too often but a secondary recommendation to fill such situations in England; interest is commonly the first; and by some unhappy mischance, we rarely find genius and interest in conjunction.

Such hours as he deemed unfavourable to composition in works of genius, were occupied by productions of less original character, the materials for which were at hand, and required only his taste, to string skilfully together. He had thus, as constant labour was necessary, at least the pleasure of variety. History at this period fixed his attention, more no doubt, as a source of profit, than of fame. The subject is indeed one which whenever treated by a writer of talent, may earn both, as he saw in the instances of Hume, Robertson and Smollett; and having already in the *Letters of a Nobleman to his Son*, tried his hand with success, was led to think there was still room for another labourer in the same field. No rivalry was intended by what he had undertaken, as his plan differed materially from theirs.

* The following polite answer to the inquiry at Mercer's Hall is creditable to the writer and seems conclusive on the subject:—

“ SIR,

“ In reply to your inquiry as to whether Dr. Goldsmith was a candidate for one of the Gresham Lectureships, I beg to state that I believe he was not. In the year 1767 there was an election to the Civil Law Lectureship in the room of Mr. Mace, deceased; there are only two persons entered as candidates — Dr. Dawson and Mr. Jeffries, the latter of whom obtained the appointment. Neither in the election preceding or subsequent to the one above alluded to, is any mention made of Goldsmith being a candidate, and I conclude that if his intentions had at any time been directed to that object, he must have abandoned them previous to the period of election. I should have been happy if I could have afforded you any information on the subject and equally gratified in the knowledge of the circumstance.

“ I am, Sir,

“ Your very obedient servant,

“ W. H. LANE.”

He appears to have thought that history, as it is usually treated, tells more than it is necessary to tell, and much more than is true. Sir Robert Walpole, and Dr. Johnson, the one a practical statesman, and the other an acute and profound philosopher, were of the same opinion. Yet on all questions connected with the conduct of preceding ages and individuals, we lean to the desire of fulness of information as the great source of wisdom to ourselves; and indeed in every great emergency connected with the political or social condition of men, the only safe guide to follow. We feel not only that nothing should be concealed on such an occasion, but that nothing should be left untold that can lead to the knowledge of truth; we are not afraid so much of tediousness as uncertainty; not of the accumulation of evidence, but of its scantiness. We can frequently spare speculations concerning motives, conceiving we may believe them or not as we think proper, and knowing that at best they are matters of opinion; but we cannot submit to be deprived of the knowledge of even minute facts. On the number and importance of these, chiefly depend our deductions; and many such must be omitted in short and unskilful histories. From this cause we are disposed rather to have our patience taxed with details, than run the risk of being left unacquainted with circumstances, sometimes apparently trifling, which serve to throw light upon the springs of human conduct.

Readers of a different description, however, require likewise to have their tastes consulted; and for these he began about this time, by an agreement with Thomas Davies, the bookseller so often mentioned by Boswell, and afterwards the biographer of Garrick, to write the Roman History. It was to be completed within two years, or less if it could be accomplished, and the sum to be paid was 250 guineas.

Early in the month of January 1768, a Mr. Roach, one of his countrymen who died in London about 1795, dined with him at his chambers in the Temple,—introduced by letters from Ireland. Several particulars of this interview he afterwards, by the aid of a good memory repeated with much interest to his friends, but being a commercial, not a literary man, not with that fulness which they, or he himself as he said, could have wished. From one of the persons thus favoured, who heard him describe this evening, on more than one occasion, a brief abstract of the chief topics of conversation has been gleaned.

Two other persons beside the host and this gentleman, formed the party; one a Mr. Higgins, unconnected with literature, the other whose name was forgotten, an author, though of no note. The dinner was of an expensive description. During a portion of the evening the conversation turned upon literary topics, and the visiter remembered a very animated comparison drawn by the Poet, between Shakspeare and Milton, censuring the latter most sharply for all his writings excepting his poetry. Otway, he considered the greatest dramatic genius which England had produced after Shakspeare. Farquhar, he said, was truer to nature and

possessed the spirit of genuine comedy in a superior degree to any other modern writer; because people were rarely so witty in their dialogue as Congreve makes them, whereas they frequently displayed that life, spirit, and vivacity, which is so conspicuous in Farquhar, though unhappily he was often coarse and licentious, as much from the taste of the age as probably from being less accustomed to good society than his contemporaries. Several other popular writers passed under review, the particulars of which are forgotten. Thomson's poetry he approved; there were many natural pictures and descriptions in it, but involved in an unnecessary parade of words. To Shenstone, Mason, Gray, and other modern writers, he gave a very qualified degree of admiration.

Having indulged in this strain for some time, he at length as if recollecting himself, burst into a fit of laughter, and addressing the literary gentleman present said—"And what do you think of our friend Boswell having the courage to venture upon poetry? Nay here are the lines;" and a newspaper was produced from which he recited several verses with a mock solemnity of manner productive of no little amusement to his auditors, adding a running commentary as he proceeded couched in a ludicrous or satirical strain. Mr. Roach remembered that the piece began with "Scotland!" "Ay, ay," said he, "Scotland is ever the burden of a Scotchman's song." "Why," he resumed, "how simple the man must be to write such lines, and call them poetry! And then to advertise them in the newspapers as his own by a formal letter to the printer! What were his friends about to let him expose himself?" Here he read the letter, and after some humorous animadversions, remarked that Dr. Johnson would be "either very angry or very witty with Boswell's verses." The evening which had passed very pleasantly, terminated by the party adjourning to the theatre.

The lines so fruitful of mirth to Goldsmith, of which the name could not be remembered by the relater of the anecdote, have since been discovered by the writer in a newspaper of the day; and with the introductory letter are subjoined for the information of the reader.* It is a prologue on the opening of the Edinburgh Theatre.

* (Public Advertiser, Jan. 12, 1768.)

"*To the Printer.*

"SIR,

"I observed in your paper lately a very incorrect copy of the Prologue which was spoken at the opening of our Theatre Royal. As I know you are always ready to oblige your old correspondents, I doubt not but you will do me the favour to insert a genuine copy.

I am, Sir,

"Your humble servant,

"J. B."

"Prologue, at the opening of the Theatre Royal in Edinburgh
Written by James Boswell, Esq. Spoken by Mr. Ross."

"Scotland, for learning and for arms renown'd
In ancient annals, is with lustre crown'd;
And still she shares whate'er the world can yield
Of letter'd fame, or glory in the field;

Johnson, as Boswell remembered, had acquired great reputation by a similar composition for Drury Lane, and there was something of characteristic presumption, or love of imitation, in attempting to follow in the track of his great master; he mistook his powers indeed in venturing on verse. Whether Johnson ridiculed the lines does not appear, but Boswell seems to have been willing to forget them. What he would have submitted to from him, would have been resented coming from Goldsmith; and the opinion of his verses by the latter, prone at all times to speak his sentiments freely, probably reached his ears and had its effect in producing distaste toward the critic.

Dissensions arising among the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre which produced harassing appeals to courts of law, retarded the appearance of his comedy more than two months beyond the period originally intended, namely November 1767; and at one time, by the account of the author, almost made it the innocent victim of their squabbles by threatening postponement till the following season. These quarrels being at length appeased for a time, the "Good-natured Man" was produced on Friday the 29th January 1768. A few preliminary though modest announcements then customary in the newspapers, hinted the fact to the friends of the writer in the following terms:—"Those ladies and gentlemen who have taken places at the Theatre Royal in Covent Garden for the new comedy of *The Good-natured Man*, are desired to take notice, that it will be performed for the first time to-morrow evening."

Dr. Johnson according to promise furnished the Prologue, several of his acquaintance attended to give it their support, and the per-

In every distant clime Great Britain knows,
 The Thistle springs promiscuous with the Rose,
 "While in all points with other lands she vied.
 The stage alone to Scotland was denied;
 Mistaken zeal, in times of darkness bred,
 O'er the best minds its gloomy vapour spread;
 Taste and Religion were supposed at strife,
 And 'twas a sin—to view this glass of life!
 When the muse ventured the ungracious task,
 To play elusive with unlicensed mask,
 Mirth was restrain'd by statutory awe,
 And tragic genius fear'd the scourge of law,
 Illustrious heroes arrant vagrants seem'd,
 And gentlest nymphs were sturdy beggars deem'd.
 "This night, loved George's free enlighten'd age
 Bids royal favour shield the Scottish stage,
 His royal favour every bosom cheers,
 The Drama now with dignity appears,
 Hard is *my* fate, if murmurings there be,
 Because the Favour is announced by me,
 "Anxious, alarm'd, and awed by every frown,
 May I entreat the candour of the Town?
 You see me here by no unworthy art;
 My *all* I venture—where I've fix'd my heart.
 Fondly ambitious of an honest fame,
 My humble hopes your kind indulgence claim.
 I wish to hold no right but by your choice;
 I'll risk my Patent on the Public Voice."

formers were not remiss in their exertions. The play notwithstanding these aids, met with less warmth of applause than most of his friends anticipated; the taste of the town had become sentimental; and the scene of the bailiffs in the opening of the third act, appeared so broad in its humour as to keep the fate of the piece some time in suspense; nor was its safety fully assured till that scene in the fourth act, where Shuter in the character of Croaker read the supposed incendiary letter.

On the second night of representation, Monday the first of February, there being no intermediate performance, this scene was retrenched; other slight alterations made in the interval rendered the audience more favourably disposed, and by these means it ran ten nights in succession, the fifth being by command of their Majesties. On the 20th March it was selected by Shuter for his benefit, when the author, grateful for the assistance rendered by the comedian, presented him with ten guineas, a not unfrequent instance of generosity when perhaps suffering from want of the sum he gave away. No sufficient hold on public favour had however been secured by the play to call for its farther repetition during the season, nor though occasionally performed, has it ever been considered what is theatrically termed a stock piece; when repeated at intervals and for benefits, the scene of the bailiffs was successfully revived. The fastidiousness of the audience on this point excites some surprise at the present day when similar characters are introduced to the stage not only without objection as objects open to the comic muse, but with great effect; so dangerous is it sometimes, though so honourable, for genius to start into an untrodden track.

The third, sixth, and ninth nights, according to the custom of the time, were advertised as appropriated to the author, a convenient hint to such as felt disposed to advance his interests by their attendance. The profits it is supposed did not exceed 350*l.* or 400*l.*; a sum less than that assigned by rumour, though comparing it with other receipts of the theatre about the same period, and the expenses, probably nearer the truth.

Copyright however was then of considerable value to a dramatist; a good reception at the theatre promised corresponding advantages from the press, but at present this source of emolument is said to be unproductive. The play was published on the 5th February; on the following day a memorandum still in existence shows that through the medium of a Mr. Geeve, he drew for 50*l.* upon Griffin the publisher, whose advertisements implied considerable public attention to the piece; one of these exhibiting the rapidity of sale on such occasions may be transcribed. "The first large impression of the new comedy of the Good-natured Man, written by Dr. Goldsmith, being sold off on Saturday last (the 6th, the day after publication,) a new edition will be published this afternoon, at three o'clock; when those ladies and gentlemen that were then disappointed of their books may be supplied by W. Griffin, in Catherine Street in the Strand." On the 22d of the same month a fourth edition appeared, as the

advertisement states, "By Mr. Goldsmith;" it is therefore probable he profited to some amount through this channel.

On the whole therefore if not received with all the ardour satisfactory to sanguine expectation, it could not be considered a failure, though such appears to have been the impression left on the mind of the author. His mortification on the first night of its appearance was not only extreme, but the efforts made to conceal his feelings before others at the moment were scarcely less painful. All this he afterwards confessed with a candour exhibiting his characteristic want of reserve, while the little credit gained by the acknowledgment from at least one of his auditors, shows that in justice to ourselves, such confessions should be rarely made. Dr. Johnson who had been in his company the evening on which the play was performed and witnessed his distress, heard the avowal of that distress with surprise at the Chaplain's table at St. James's Palace when both were dining with Dr. Percy, and censured it as silly, saying that "no man should be expected to sympathize with the sorrows of vanity," a harsher remark than the matter deserved. Most dramatic writers would have felt as acutely as Goldsmith, though few might so unreservedly have avowed it; after all however there was something of moral courage in the disclosure; the matter was then over, and his reputation could withstand the acknowledgment of what, with an author, is scarcely a weakness.

"Returning home one day from dining at the Chaplain's table," says Mrs. Piozzi who tells the story, "he (Johnson) told me that Dr. Goldsmith had given a very comical and unnecessarily exact recital there of his own feelings when his play was hissed; telling the company how he went to the Literary Club at night" (it will be remembered that the representation took place on Friday,) "and chatted gaily among his friends as if nothing had happened amiss; that to impress them still more forcibly with an idea of his magnanimity, he even sung his favourite song about '*an old woman tossed in a blanket seventeen times as high as the moon*;' but 'all this while I was suffering horrid tortures,' said he, 'and verily believe that if I had put a bit into my mouth it would have strangled me on the spot, I was so excessively ill; but I made more noise than usual to cover all that; and so they never perceived my not eating, nor I believe at all imaged to themselves the anguish of my heart; but when all were gone except Johnson here I burst out a-crying, and even *swore* that I would never write again.' 'All which Doctor,' said Dr. Johnson, amazed at his odd frankness, 'I thought had been a secret between you and me; and I am sure I would not have said any thing about it for the world.'"

It has been justly remarked that the first lines of Johnson's prologue, commenced probably in one of his frequent fits of despondency, form an inappropriate introduction to a comedy.

"Prest by the load of life, the weary mind,
Surveys the general toil of human kind!"

But it has escaped the research of Boswell that two lines, originally

forming the fifth and sixth, were omitted on the second or third night of representation, lest they might be misconstrued and give offence; the allusion was to the general election—

“Amidst the toils of this returning year,
When senators and nobles learn to fear!”

It would likewise appear that the four following lines, which serve to carry on the parallel between the candidates for parliamentary and dramatic honours, were not in the original copy as spoken at the theatre.

“‘This day the powder’d curls and golden coat,’
Says swelling Crispin ‘begg’d a cobbler’s vote.’
‘This night the wit’ the pert apprentice cries,
‘Lies at my feet, I hiss him, and he dies.’”

Several minor emendations evince that the great critic, while quick in discerning errors in the verses of others, was not inattentive to the defects of his own, and gave them, when an opportunity offered, careful revision. One of these, made chiefly perhaps to save the dignity of the Poet, improved the elegance of the line. For however admissible in the familiar intercourse of private life to allude to the personal appearance of an author, there is some want of taste in introducing it to an audience, few of whom ever have, or even may, see him, and cannot therefore if it be a joke, enjoy it. The seventh line originally ran “Our *little* bard without complaint may share,” which epithet in the amended copy was changed to *anxious*, as being at once more poetical and appropriate to the feelings of an author brought before his judges for sentence. In the original stood—

“Uncheck’d on both *caprice may vent its rage*,
As *children fret* the lion in a cage.”

which are now changed to

“Uncheck’d on both loud rabbles vent their rage,
As mongrels bay the lion in a cage.”

In the first copy the words of the line—

“The poet’s foes their schemes of spite dismiss,”

are now slightly transposed and stand

“Their schemes of spite the poet’s foes dismiss.”

The concluding line stood—

“Trusts without fear, to *candour*, and to you.”

But as candour cannot well be separated from the person displaying it, there appears something like repetition in the thought, and it was therefore judiciously changed to—

"Trusts without fear, to *merit*, and to you."

The epilogue came from his own pen. He had expected one as he informs us, from a friend at Oxford, and in this hope, deferred writing it till the last moment; and under the circumstances of being produced in haste and anxiety, possesses great merit. In this likewise we find a few alterations, two lines being added in the present copy, which do not appear in what was addressed to the audience—

"No, no, I've other contests to maintain,
To-night I head our troops at Warwick Lane."

Two others which stood originally the last but four, were afterwards transposed by him, and now appear the twenty-first and second.

"Our Author's friends thus placed at happy distance,
Give him good words indeed, but no assistance."

The prologue and epilogue in their original state will be found in the Public Advertiser, 3d February 1768.

The merit of this comedy, in the judgment of persons the most competent to form an opinion, is superior to its success at the moment, or since. But there seems to exist a law of the English stage, become from frequency almost irreversible, that what has once been rejected, or coolly received, is never again to be taken into public favour, though that decree we are assured from the materials that go to make up an audience, must often be the result of the caprice, or humour of the moment. There is however no appeal; critics may question the justice, but there is no disputing the tastes, of the multitude. And as a dramatic author writes for the express gratification of these tastes, if he fails, he can scarcely condemn, however he may lament, the decision of his judges.

Examined in the closet as a dramatic composition, it will not be found deficient in the usual sources of interest, plot, business, humour, and character; the delineation of the latter he says in the preface, having been his principal aim. We have therefore three which seem in great measure new to the stage; Lofty who promises favours to his friends from his alleged intimacy with the great of whom he knows nothing; Croaker always anticipating evil from trifling occurrences, yet selfish and arbitrary, a character borrowed from that of Suspirius in the Rambler; and Honeywood, drawn in the extreme of inconsiderate and almost insipid good-nature, who is incapable of giving a negative to an application from his friends, whether it be for his mistress or his money; and in many of whose characteristics Goldsmith is supposed to have had his own peculiarities in view. Burke applauded the play as one of the best of the time, and took some interest in its success. Dr. Johnson said that "The Good-natured Man" was the best comedy that had appeared since the "Provoked Husband;" while "False Delicacy" the rival, and more successful performance at Drury Lane, he considered devoid of charac-

ter. Theatrical critics differed with him so far that while the merit of the former was allowed, equal praise was claimed for the latter; but the prevailing taste of the town will be better estimated by the opinion of one of its chief leaders at this period, whose approbation is divided with more seeming impartiality. "We cannot help expressing how much satisfaction it gives us, to see the public at once in possession of two such comedies, as *False Delicacy* and *The Good-natured Man*; each of which notwithstanding their respective imperfections, must be allowed to be the productions of genius. If the Drury Lane comedy is more refined, correct, and sentimental, the Covent Garden performance is more bold, more comic, and more characteristic; and if the former, from the chaste accuracy and duly-tempered spirit of the author, has less need of pardon, the latter from having hazarded more has more title to mercy and forgiveness. The merit of both is great, and we are happy that the beauties of each piece are of a different complexion from that of the other; for in an age of good writers each several author will have a manner peculiar to himself; but when contemporary poets all fall into the same vein, such a similarity of style denotes a barrenness of invention in them all; not but the two writers in question have shown themselves equal to the efforts of the other. The character of Cecil in *False Delicacy* is drawn to the true spirit of comedy, and many scenes of the *Good-natured Man* abound with the most elegant sentiments. The first of these pieces needed no alteration; and we are pleased to find that the only amendments which were necessary have been made in the latter."

"*False Delicacy*," so extolled at the moment though long since forgotten by readers as well as play-goers, appeared at Drury Lane on the 23d of January, nearly a week before the play of Goldsmith at the other house. So great was the applause as to cause Garrick nearly to break through a regulation announced only that morning in the journals that "the managers of Drury Lane Theatre intend for the future not to run any new piece nine nights successively, but to perform other pieces occasionally that they may give a greater variety of entertainments to the public." Whether doubts of success were implied by this announcement does not appear, but a reception so unequivocal decided him to run it *eight* nights in succession, thus keeping just within the line of his engagement, and he repeated it not unfrequently during the season. When published it had equal success if we are to believe the following announcement. "The new comedy, called '*False Delicacy*,' published yesterday morning, was so rapidly bought, that the proprietors had sold the first impression of three thousand copies before two o'clock." It passed to a fourth edition within two or three weeks, and ten thousand copies were sold in the season; a public breakfast was given to the author, at the Chapter Coffee House; and a piece of plate, value twenty pounds, presented to him by the publishers.

Two comedies appearing nearly at the same moment at the two houses, of professedly opposite styles and merits, necessarily in-

volved a kind of rivalry between the authors; and the continual discussions to which they gave rise when theatrical affairs were of general interest, their publication within three days of each other, their progress step by step through the press, a fourth edition of each being called for about the same time, produced at length something like jealousy. Rumour insinuated that the Good-natured Man had been seen by Kelly, while in the hands of Garrick or of some of his friends; and that hints from its situations and sentiments had been taken to improve his own piece. For this charge there seems no foundation, excepting the slight coincidence of the offer of Miss Marchmont in *False Delicacy* to surrender her lover, be supposed similar to Honeywood's design of surrendering his mistress.

The report however increased the unpleasant feelings arising between the parties. Goldsmith was induced to speak freely of his opponent's play by the remarks and flattery of several of the lower order of writers, who surrounded and preyed upon him; men who too often when their own attacks fail upon a work of genius, take delight in making greater wits assail each other. Kelly is said to have retaliated. When they met however on one occasion behind the scenes of Covent Garden, Goldsmith thought it necessary to congratulate him on the success of his play, to which the other, who was well aware of his opinion, replied with sufficient spirit and readiness—"If I thought you sincere, Mr. Goldsmith, I should thank you." Thenceforward their intercourse which had assumed some degree of intimacy, ceased; it had commenced at Newbery's about 1765, and gave rise to a story, that Goldsmith once entertained the design of marrying the sister of Kelly's wife, a rumour for which the late Mr. John Taylor, who knew her, informed the writer there was no foundation. After the quarrel, Kelly was commonly numbered among the anonymous assailants of the Poet, of whom there were always many in the newspapers; an assertion never proved against him, and probably from the emotion, much to his credit, evinced at the funeral of his dramatic opponent which he attended, untrue; yet even this tribute of tears, shed over the grave of a former friend, became a handle for abuse in some lines, of which the following are a sufficient specimen.

"Hence K...y who years, without honour or shame,
Had been sticking his *bodkin** in Oliver's fame,
Who thought, like the Tartar, by this to inherit
His genius, his learning, simplicity, spirit;
Now sets every feature to weep o'er his fate,
And acts as a mourner to blubber in state," &c.

Hugh Kelly was one of those men of whom there are several in the history of letters, who starting into life under serious disadvantages, found nothing in his progress through it, but his own industry to help him on his way, and who unable to attain a place

* In allusion to his original calling of stay-maker.

in the first rank of genius, received little credit for the talents he really possessed, or the difficulties he overcame. Born in Ireland in an humble station of life and apprenticed to a stay-maker, but feeling his mind superior to his occupation, he transferred himself to London at the age of twenty-one. Here he experienced much of that distress which awaits the poor and unfriended; from occasional employment in his trade he became a writer in an attorney's office, then a contributor to magazines and newspapers, afterwards an editor, and finally appeared as an original writer in essays called the "Babbler," the "History of Louisa Mildmay," and "Thespis," a poem, on the plan of the Rosciad of Churchill. False Delicacy was his first comedy, followed by a Word to the Wise, Clementina, a Tragedy, the School for Wives, Romance of an Hour, and the Man of Reason. He had entered himself of one of the Inns of Court, was called to the bar, and had some chance of succeeding in this new career when disease, contracted by the sedentary habits inseparable from literature, terminated an industrious and inoffensive, if not meritorious life.

Circumstances made it a kind of fashion to depreciate Kelly while alive, for no reason that can be discovered excepting the original sins of poverty and the calling to which he had been brought up, the latter furnishing a handle for the wit of such as assailed him. The learned treated him lightly from the limited nature of his acquirements, though this defect he remedied in part by sedulous study; men of the first genius denied his claims to equality; inferior writers questioned his superiority and could at least abuse what they failed to equal, for with this class the supposed use of his power as editor of periodical works, kept him in continual conflict. And having written largely in support of the ministers, those who disliked their politics thought it necessary to condemn his plays in order to exhibit their patriotism. Between parties so unfriendly or hostile there was little hope of meeting an unbiassed judgment, and it is doubtful whether he ever received it. His political writings were shrewd and sensible, and from the anger excited in opponents, may be supposed to have their effect; his dramatic pieces much above mediocrity and commonly successful; his essays, though destitute of the depth of Johnson or the humour of Goldsmith, touch upon manners very agreeably; his novel is still perused; and Thespis, if inferior to Churchill's satire, is not without pungency and power. All these and others not avowed were written amid the cares of providing for a young family wholly dependent on his pen for support; his life was therefore laborious, and his morals it is said blameless; and if we decline placing him in the first rank among the writers of his day, we cannot withhold the praise of variety and ingenuity.

The disagreement of Kelly and Goldsmith became a source of amusement to several who had assisted to foment it; among others to Kenrick who at once envied and aimed to be a competitor of both. He had lately produced a comedy called the Widowed Wife, with indifferent credit. The greater applause bestowed on the pro-

ductions of his rivals, followed within a few weeks by the success of Bickerstaffe's opera of *Lionel and Clarissa*, and Murphy's tragedy of *Zenobia*, which seemed to throw the three departments of the drama exclusively into the hands of Irish writers, excited his spleen, and it found vent in the following parody on Dryden's lines on Milton; they are preserved as evidence that he "whose hand was against every man" and who never hesitated to use it in a hostile manner, had nothing worse to say. Murphy seems to have escaped, not from particular favour, but from having no niche in the verses properly adapted to receive him.

"The Poetical Triumvirate."

"Three poets in three distant ages born," &c.—*Dryden*.

"Poor Dryden! what a theme had'st thou,
Compared with that which offers now?
What are your Britons—Romans—Grecians,
Compared with thorough bred Milesians,
Step into G...ff...n's* shop, he'll tell you,
Of G...ds..th, B...k...rs...ffe, and K...ll...;
Three poets of one age and nation,
Whose more than mortal reputation,
Mounting in trio, to the skies,
O'er Milton's fame and Virgil's flies,
While take one Irish evidence for t'other,
Ev'n Homer's self is but their foster-brother."

In May this year he lost his brother, the Rev. Henry Goldsmith, for whom he had been unable to obtain preferment in the church; a failure which among his relatives less acquainted with the world, as fame was erroneously supposed by them to be influence, incurred the reproach of negligence. They knew not the terms on which an author usually lives with the great, who are often willing to admire in him what deserves admiration, but seldom think it necessary to evince their consideration in the form of patronage or reward. Neither will the honest pride of a man of genius always permit him to solicit favours, either for himself or his friends; he shrinks from being considered a dependent, where nature has in some respects made him an equal; and he may have been observant enough to discover that the assumption of independence commands respect from the most supercilious. He is not then suspected of being likely to be a tax upon his acquaintance possessed of rank or power, and is thus enabled to retain their society, if not their esteem, without suspicion of his motives.

To the curacy of Kilkenny West, the moderate stipend of which, forty pounds a year, is sufficiently celebrated by his brother's lines, it has been stated that Mr. Goldsmith added a school, which after having been held at more than one place in the vicinity, was finally fixed at Lissoy. Here his talents and industry gave it celebrity, and under his care the sons of many of the neighbouring gentry received their education. A fever breaking out among the boys about 1765,

* Griffin, the bookseller, in Catherine Street in the Strand.

they dispersed for a time; but re-assembling at Athlone, he continued his scholastic labours there until the time of his death, which happened like that of his brother, about the forty-fifth year of his age. He was a man of an excellent heart and amiable disposition. The late Mr. John Goldsmith of Stephen's Green, Dublin, one of the family of Ballyoughter, and his pupil, communicated to the writer several anecdotes of his unaffected goodness. His views of the duties of his sacred office were strict, and his piety unfeigned. It is recorded of him by his brother, that he once saw, or believed he saw, an apparition; under what circumstances is not mentioned, nor could inquiry of the relatives of the family glean traditionary notices of the story; but he was not a weak man, and firmly believed, beyond doubt, what he told. Of his descendants some particulars will be hereafter given.

In the spring of this year, the Poet visited Derbyshire, one of those occasional excursions made into the country whenever his literary occupations permitted. In this county it was said he was a visitant at Ilam, situated near the entrance of Dove Dale, where a seat in the garden was shown some years ago as his, but no positive trace of his residence there or intimacy with the proprietor has been found. Hampshire, Sussex, Suffolk, Yorkshire, Leicestershire, and Lincolnshire are remembered to have been favourite counties for similar journeys; sometimes for health or recreation, at other periods with the design of visiting friends, or in order to examine such objects of nature or art as they afforded. Often at such times he was alone; occasionally with a companion whenever an agreeable one equally unoccupied could be found willing to enter upon such an excursion.

When unable to proceed to a distance from town by the necessity of fulfilling a literary engagement, he retired a few miles into the vicinity, often on the Harrow or Edgeware roads, working diligently at his task, and not being seen for two or three months together although his place of retreat was known. At such places his chief amusement when not occupied at the desk, was, as he said, a stroll along the shady hedges in the neighbourhood, seating himself in the most agreeable spots, furnished with paper and pencil, and taking notes of occasional thoughts which were afterwards expanded and corrected at home; or sometimes when engaged upon plays and poems he wrote the lines or dialogues off at once. In this way several sketches for the poem of the *Deserted Village* were made; and about this period indeed he first set himself seriously to work upon that production, not prosecuting it constantly, but at intervals as his genius inclined, or his mind felt at ease. Bishop Percy in conversation frequently alluded to these habits.

While resident in town, his sedentary habits were usually relieved by a walk to one of the villages in the neighbourhood, the enjoyment of a moderate though convivial dinner, the conversation of such friends as chose to be of the party, and a quiet return in the evening. Blackheath, Wandsworth, Fulham, Chelsea, Hampstead, Highgate, Highbury and others were thus frequently visited, air and exercise enjoyed, and the excursion jocularly termed by him a tradesman's holiday. A few persons survive who remember these excursions.

sions, or heard them dwelt upon by their acquaintance who had participated in their enjoyment. The party, which seldom consisted of more than four or five persons, chiefly connected with literature, the legal or medical professions, always assembled at his chambers to a remarkably plentiful and rather expensive breakfast; and when finished, he had usually some poor women in attendance to whom the fragments were consigned. On one occasion a wealthy city acquaintance not remarkable for elegance of mind or manners, who observed this liberality, said with some degree of freedom, "Why, Doctor, you must be a rich man; *I cannot afford to do this.*" "It is not wealth, my dear sir," was the reply of the Doctor willing to rebuke without offending his guest, "but inclination. I have only to suppose that a few more friends than usual have been of our party, and then it amounts to the same thing."

One of the number not unfrequently, was an amanuensis occasionally in his employment still remembered and familiarly known as "Peter Barlow," a person offering some peculiarities of manner, and thence an object of wit to several friends of the Poet. He always wore the same dress, never gave more than a certain sum, a trifle, for his dinner, but insisted upon paying this punctually; and as the expense of the repast always exceeded considerably the stipulated amount he chose to contribute, his employer paid the difference; the peculiarities of "Peter" affording in return, a fund of amusement to the party. One of their frequent retreats was the well-known Chelsea Bun-house.

Another of these persons, selected chiefly for his facetious qualities, was an humble dependant on literature named Glover, who having been educated for the medical profession usually received the appellation of Doctor. He had relinquished it however for the stage, and while performing at Cork, being accidentally taken into a house where lay the body of a malefactor just executed, he was induced to attempt to restore life, and to the astonishment of perhaps himself as much as the friends of the criminal, succeeded. His fame rapidly spread, he had again recourse to his original calling, though with less success than was expected, from the success of his experiment as restorer of the apparently dead, and ultimately proceeding to London, found between physic and writing for the booksellers, a scanty subsistence. Goldsmith formed then a leading object of interest to all similar adventurers from Ireland; he was easy of access, his nature, particularly to those who sought his good offices, unsuspecting, his purse open to demands upon it, and his vanity perhaps flattered by having a levee of needy authors at his breakfast table, soliciting advice upon literary projects, and pouring out their admiration in return for his fare and his counsel. Among these he soon found a place, being taken into some degree of favour; and as the following idea of the company, and of the claims thereby engendered on the patron, is said to be written by him, though anonymously, we have no reason to doubt its accuracy: "Our Doctor, as Goldsmith was now universally called, had a constant levee of his distressed countrymen, whose wants as far as he was able, he always relieved; and he

has been often known to leave himself without a guinea, in order to supply the necessities of others."

Glover, who as a teller of stories amused the frequenters of the Globe and Devil Taverns, and thence, as his own finances seldom permitted such disbursements, had his reckoning commonly paid by the visitors, was not a man of sufficient talents to profit by opportunities and furnish any new or striking views of Goldsmith. It may be doubted whether he was so intimate as he said, or that he did not forfeit by misconduct further claim to consideration; for in an early copy of *Retaliation G*——, which was probably meant for him, stood where Woodfall's name now stands. He wrote a short biography of his patron, published after his death, which is defective in facts, as well as in anecdote; several of the latter he recalled to memory afterwards in conversation, but any higher effort was beyond his powers. It requires a clever man to speak instructively of clever men; he must be qualified to analyze mind, or to estimate character; for it will be observed that of the numbers that chance to know a man of genius, how few there are, when they tell any thing, who have more than his foibles and frailties to tell.

A few of his anecdotes, as they were also known to others, were doubtless true, some certainly more questionable, and others probably the mere coinage of imagination, but his powers of mimicry, it appears added greatly to their effect. "Besides being a great humorist," says Sir William Beechey, in a communication by which the writer is obliged, "the stories related by Glover of his acquaintance were told so well, with a humour so peculiar, and with such a knowledge of their customary phrases and manner in conversation, that none who ventured to repeat them could hope to produce equal effect. He usually selected their peculiarities for illustration; thus of Goldsmith, Foote, Garrick, Colman, Sterne whom he professed to have known, and others, he gave a vivid representation in voice, gesture, and phraseology, so as to produce universal mirth."

Goldsmith, according to this person, when his reputation became high sought a kind of privacy in his country walks, desiring to be taken out of frequented neighbourhoods so as not to be recognised; and on one occasion expressed displeasure to the person who accompanied him, for proceeding through a village where the latter happened to be known. Pride could scarcely be the object here as was insinuated, whatever wish he might otherwise have for temporary concealment.

Another story from the same quarter is still more improbable.

Having extended their walk, for Glover was as he said with him, from the Kilburn road through West End to Hampstead, Goldsmith who had dined, felt fatigued in descending the hill homeward, and observing a cottage with the window open where the inmates were at tea, remarked to his companion, "I should be glad to be of the party." "That can be immediately accomplished," was the reply; "allow me to introduce you." Without hesitation, Glover, who really knew nothing of the parties, entered the house with an air of familiarity followed by the unconscious Poet, made his way to the

room, shook hands cordially with the owner who rose to receive him, but fixing his eyes upon what he conceived the most good-natured countenance in company, muttered some indistinct words of recognition, and instantly commenced a jocular story invented for the occasion, of an amusing adventure on the road. This he followed by others of a similar kind, so as to produce the effect intended, that of persuading the master of the house they were intimate with his guests, and the guests that they were friends of the host; an hour was thus pleasantly spent, tea was offered and accepted, and with the same affectation of familiarity and good humour they withdrew. Some misgivings of the trick had in the meantime arisen in the mind of Goldsmith, who the moment he quitted the house, inquired whether any of the party were really known to his companion, who replied with as little ceremony that he had never seen one of them before. The mortification of the former, who attributed their escape from summary ejection by force only to his own person being known, was extreme; and a wish was expressed to return and apologize for the jest. From this he was persuaded by his companion remarking, "Doctor, we are unknown; you quite as much as I; if you return and tell the story, it will be in the newspapers to-morrow; nay, upon recollection, I remember in one of their offices the face of that squinting fellow who sat in the corner as if he was treasuring up my stories for future use, and we shall be sure of being exposed; let us therefore keep our own counsel." The skill with which this tale of his own assurance was told by Glover, the repetition of the dialogues, and the descriptions of the occasional embarrassments and surprise of Goldsmith during the adventure, formed no inconsiderable part of the humour of the story.

His carelessness of money according to the same authority, and of which there was little doubt, exhibited an unusual, if not ostentatious negligence. Whenever a sum was procured and the most pressing demands paid, the remainder was thrown by in an open drawer, to be disbursed either by himself or his servant, as occasion required. When a friend once called at an earlier hour than usual, the bill of the laundress chanced to lie on the table for payment, and the footman received orders to "pay the poor woman." A sum of moment happened to be in the drawer from which the domestic after turning it over with seeming care, though evidently no adept at calculation, took the amount, and the remainder was replaced. The visiter, who had observed the proceeding, at length inquired whether as a matter of prudence it was right to place such a temptation in the way of a person in his station of life, who in some unhappy moment might be tempted to abuse his trust. The only reply was, with an expression of surprise, "What, my dear friend, do you take Dennis for a thief?"

This servant in whom he reposed great confidence, was some time afterwards taken extremely ill, to the great regret of his master, and the case requiring surgical aid, Mr. (now Sir William) Blizard,*

* Since this was written Sir William has expired, at a very advanced age.

whom he had met at the table of Doctor Grant, in Fenchurch Street, and who had just commenced practice, was called in. Sir William informs the writer that he was obliged to perform the operation for empyema, that is, to make an opening into the cavity of the chest, for the dislodgment of matter accumulated there in consequence of previous inflammation; the result was successful, and excited a degree of attention highly advantageous to the reputation of the then young surgeon.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Anecdotes.—Gentleman's Journal.—Epilogue to "The Sister."—Agreement for History of Animated Nature.—Roman History.—Agreement for History of England.—Acquaintance with Mr. Bunbury and Family,—Verses Attributed to Him. Appointed Professor of History to Royal Academy.—Maurice Goldsmith.

In the summer of 1768, in order to have leisure to proceed with the History of Rome, free from the interruptions common to a residence in town, he took a cottage near Edgware, in the vicinity of Canons, in conjunction with Mr. Bott, the gentleman already mentioned whose chambers adjoined his own. This abode though small, possessed a good garden, and had been occupied as a country retreat by a shoemaker of wealth in Piccadilly, who having expended some trouble and money in its decoration, was thence called by new tenants "The Shoemaker's Paradise." Here he and his friends found air and retirement, and the distance being no more than eight miles from town, occasional engagements to dinner there were still indulged, and the usual dinner hour being then four o'clock, or earlier; and in the evening they found it agreeable to return to their retreat.

This appears to have been a work of occasional peril when his companion, who drove a gig, happened to indulge too freely in the pleasures of the table. There is a letter still extant, written by the Poet to this gentleman some time subsequently, in reply to a letter of invitation to visit him in the Isle of Wight, in which there is allusion to one of their escapes. It commences with acknowledgments to Bott, to whom he was under frequent pecuniary obligations, for assistance rendered in a moment of difficulty, as he could now sit down in his chambers in safety without the terrors of arrest hanging momentarily over his head; and proceeds to recall a scene they had experienced together in driving at night down the Edgware Road, when his companion having driven against a post to the imminent danger of their necks, sturdily maintained that he was in the centre of the road.

An anonymous writer in one of the useful minor publications of the day,* states another of his temporary residences to have been a

* Mirror vol. xix. p. 147.

small wooden cottage, on the north side of the Edgeware Road, about a mile from Paddington, near what is called Kilburn Priory. No authority however is adduced for this statement; nor is it probable, since the cottage seems too small to contain besides the family, an inmate in the character of a lodger. The same account states that here was written "*Animated Nature*;" it is therefore probably confounded with the farm-house at Hyde, of which notice will be taken hereafter.

Among several Irish acquaintance settled in London, was a Mr. Seguin, a mercantile man of some literary tastes, who having taken country lodgings for his family in the vicinity of this residence, frequently visited and was visited by its occupant. A considerable intimacy it appears existed between him and this gentleman, to two of whose children he stood godfather; and from a surviving member of the family in Dublin, a few slight notices of his habits have been gleaned from parental recollection.

While in London, they dined with him on several occasions, in the Temple, and met at different periods Bickerstaffe, Kelly, Dr. Percy, a variety of authors of minor note, and on one occasion Dr. Johnson, who was invited in order to gratify two others of his Irish friends, a Mr. and Mrs. Pollard, of Castle Pollard, who having heard so much of the celebrated moralist, were very desirous to see him before they quitted the English metropolis. Goldsmith was enabled to gratify their curiosity, but impressed a preliminary caution on the strangers present to talk only on such subjects, Irish matters for instance, as they perfectly understood, and above all, when he had begun to talk, not to interrupt him. This was punctually obeyed; Johnson proved to be in good humour, and the day passed off pleasantly. These entertainments he gave in an expensive manner, but was so little disposed personally to what is called high living, that his constant supper, as they had opportunities of observing, and did not forget to tell in Ireland, was boiled milk.

The impression handed down in this family of his personal demeanour is that he was a very guileless, or as it is phrased in the sister country, an innocent man; cheerful and playful in society where he was known; fond of conversation, music, or any amusement going forward. One of the accomplishments on which he prided himself was dancing, but in going through a minuet with Mrs. Seguin, his manner once excited her risibility as well as that of the more juvenile spectators, in an uncontrollable manner, which however was borne by him with great good humour. He amused them with several Irish songs; and one of his chief favourites was the Scotch ballad of Johnny Armstrong. He unbent without reserve to the level of whoever were his companions. In all their youthful diversions, he took such interest as to become rather a leader than merely a participator, and joined in such as were most familiar; whether blind man's buff, romping, forfeits, or the more trivial games at cards in which by affecting to cheat, or showing an eagerness to win, his companions were always rendered very mirthful and boisterous. With associates of a still more juvenile class, he did not

hesitate to exhibit still more familiarity, putting the front of his wig behind, or any other trick calculated to excite their merriment.

Of his attention to children Mr. Colman, whose memory may have been refreshed by repetitions of the anecdote, as he was very young at the time, tells the following story, which occurred in this year, and about the same period.

“Oliver Goldsmith, several years before my luckless presentation to Johnson, proved how ‘doctors differ.’ I was only five years old when Goldsmith took me on his knee, while he was drinking coffee, one evening with my father, and began to play with me; which amiable act I returned with the ingratitude of a peevish brat, by giving him a very smart slap in the face; it must have been a tinger, for I left the marks of my little spiteful paw upon his cheek. This infantile outrage was followed by summary justice, and I was locked up by my indignant father in an adjoining room to undergo solitary imprisonment in the dark.

“Here I began to howl and scream most abominably, which was no bad step towards liberation, since those who were not inclined to pity me, might be likely to set me free, for the purpose of abating a nuisance.

“At length a friend appeared to extricate me from jeopardy, and that generous friend was no other than the man I had so wantonly molested, by assault and battery—it was the tender-hearted Doctor himself, with a lighted candle in his hand, and a smile upon his countenance, which was still partially red from the effects of my petulance. I sulked and sobbed, and he fondled and soothed, till I began to brighten. Goldsmith, who in regard to children was like the village preacher he has so beautifully described, for

‘Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distress’d,’

seized the propitious moment of returning good humour, so he put down the candle and began to conjure. He placed three hats which happened to be in the room, upon the carpet, and a shilling under each;—the shillings he told me were England, France and Spain, ‘Hey, presto, cockolorum!’ cried the Doctor, and lo! on uncovering the shillings, which had been dispersed, each beneath a separate hat, they were all found congregated under one. I was no politician at the time, and therefore might not have wondered at the sudden revolution which brought England, France and Spain all under one crown; but as I was also no conjurer, it amazed me beyond measure. Astonishment might have amounted to awe for one who appeared to me gifted with the power of performing miracles, if the good-nature of the man, had not obviated my dread of the magician; but from that time whenever the Doctor came to visit my father,

‘I pluck’d his gown, to share the good man’s smile,’

a game of romps constantly ensued, and we were always cordial friends, and merry playfellows.

"Our unequal companionship varied somewhat in point of sports, as I grew older, but it did not last long; my senior playfellow died, alas! in his forty-fifth year, some months after I had attained my eleventh. His death it has been thought was hastened by mental inquietude; if this supposition be true, never did the turmoils of life subdue a mind more warm with sympathy for the misfortunes of our fellow-creatures; but his character is familiar to every one who reads; in all the numberless accounts of his virtues and his foibles, his genius and absurdities, his knowledge of nature, and his ignorance of the world; his 'compassion for another's wo' was always predominant; and any trivial thing of his humouring a froward child weighs but a feather in the recorded scale of his benevolence."

In November 1768* appeared a new periodical work published by Griffin, called "The Gentleman's Journal or Weekly Register of News, Politics, Literature, and Amusements," changed after the second number, from being weekly to appear once a fortnight. To this Goldsmith was said to have contributed several articles. What they were are unknown; his connexion with the publisher renders the matter probable, but the tables of contents of each number, still extant, although the paper itself has not been found, furnish no clew to indicate their nature. He was not however as has been erroneously asserted, the editor; Kenrick, Kelly, and others are likewise said to have been contributors; and a jest of the Poet was repeated by Mr. Cooke, when in reply to a remark made on the premature termination of its career he said, "No uncommon cause, my dear sir; it died of too many doctors."

In February 1769 was represented the comedy of "The Sister,"† by Mrs. Charlotte Lennox, taken from one of her novels called *Henrietta*, to which Colman contributed the prologue and Goldsmith an excellent epilogue, the best perhaps he has written. Neither of these however could save the piece; for meeting with opposition the first night, it was, although announced for a second representation, voluntarily withdrawn by the authoress, who by an anecdote related by Mr. Langton seems to have been the victim of some ill nature.

"Dr. Goldsmith," according to that gentleman, "upon the occasion of Mrs. Lennox's bringing out a play, said to Dr. Johnson, at

* In Nicholl's *Literary Anecdotes* the date 1760 is erroneously assigned to this work. The following is the first advertisement.

"Saturday Nov. 19th will be published, in octavo, price sixpence, a new pamphlet, to be continued every Saturday called 'The Gentleman's Journal, or Weekly Register of News, Politics, Literature, and Amusements.'

"Upon these occasions it is usual to offer something by way of address to the public; and frequent experience convinces us that a great deal may be said in an advertisement, whatever is done in the work it is intended to introduce. But though to perform more than other publishers of periodical pamphlets may be thought no very difficult task, to promise so is certainly impossible. The proprietor of 'The Gentleman's Journal, therefore begs leave to refer such as may be willing to encourage this undertaking, to his first number, where they will at once be judges of the design, and execution. Printed for W. Griffin, at Garrick's Head, in Catharine Street in the Strand."—*Public Advertiser*, Nov. 11th, 1768.

† Usually called in theatrical history, "The Sisters," though the bills of the day use the singular number and correctly, for it was afterwards published by Davies.

the club, that a person had advised him to go and hiss it because she had attacked Shakspeare in her book, called 'Shakspeare Illustrated.' 'And did you not tell him,' returned Johnson, 'that he was a rascal?' 'No, sir,' rejoined Goldsmith, 'I did not. Perhaps he might not mean what he said.' 'Nay, sir,' was the reply, 'if he lied, it is a different thing.' Colman, who was present, slyly said (but it is believed Dr. Johnson did not hear him) 'Then the proper expression should have been—Sir, if you don't lie, you're a rascal.'" Some error may have occurred in the story as to the play, for it seems strange he should be asked to hiss a piece for which he had written the epilogue.

At this period, not in 1771 as is commonly supposed, he first formed the design of writing a History of Animated Nature, to which there were several inducements. He possessed a taste for the more amusing if not for the scientific parts of the pursuit; a popular compilation on the subject was wanting, as that of Brookes, his connexion with which has been noticed, had failed; as a literary speculation he thought it admitted of being executed by the aid of books without much original research, and would thus afford time and means for the composition of works on which he meant to rest his fame. No pretensions to originality were assumed; but to give elegance, animation, and interest to the book, he thought it necessary to write the articles directly from the impressions of his own mind, rather than in the character of editor of the labours of another.

Natural history is not merely an amusing but a useful study; one in which all are interested and with which all would be gladly acquainted, were it not to the majority of persons too much labour to learn. We are surrounded by living objects whose existence is obvious, but of whose history and habitudes we know little; our curiosity becomes continually excited by what we see, but as individual observation can embrace only a small portion of the vast volume of nature spread out before us, books are required for this necessary information by numbers who care more for the facts communicated than for scientific detail or arrangement. The simplification of such works therefore by an attractive writer not only commands popularity but is productive of real utility. His first design, was to translate Pliny with such additional notices as subsequent observation had supplied. Further consideration altered this project; it seemed inexpedient to attempt to re-introduce even with the projected additions a writer so long before the world, upon subjects many of which were not only of the most familiar kind, but within range of the daily observation of all persons, and upon which more fulness of remark and novelty of matter would be expected than so ancient an author could be supposed to furnish.

A work therefore new, or new in arrangement and detail, seemed in every respect preferable; the state of public taste and information demanded something better than we possessed; and the addition of his name, promised at least that the most amusing species of information should be selected from an amusing subject, and introduced with all the attraction of an elegant and perspicuous style.

An agreement for such work being settled with Griffin, the bookseller, the following memorandum was drawn up.

“ MEMORANDUM.

“ Feb. 29th, 1769.

“ It is this day agreed between Dr. Goldsmith, of Brick Court, in the Temple, and William Griffin, of Catherine Street in the Strand, as follows, that is to say, Dr. Goldsmith agrees to write a new Natural History of Animals, &c. to be comprised in eight volumes, octavo, each volume to contain from twenty-five, to twenty-seven sheets of pica print, for which Mr. Griffin agrees to pay Dr. Goldsmith eight hundred guineas in the following manner, viz. one hundred guineas, upon the delivery of each volume of the copy, in manuscript; and Dr. Goldsmith in consideration of the one hundred guineas per volume, hereby agrees to make over all his right, and title, to, and in, the copy of the said Natural History, to William Griffin, for ever, and to execute an assignment of the said copy on demand. It is understood by both parties that Dr. Goldsmith is to set about the work immediately and to finish the whole as soon as he conveniently can. To the above agreement both parties have set their names.

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

“ WM. GRIFFIN.”

“ If the work makes less than eight volumes the Doctor is to be paid in proportion.

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

“ WM. GRIFFIN.”

In the Spring of 1769, February according to Bishop Percy, though more probably March, he visited Oxford in company with Dr. Johnson, and is said to have had granted, *ad eundem*, the degree of M. B. No notice of it however occurs in the records of the University, although by the subjoined extract of a note from the Rev. Dr. Bliss, the registrar, to the writer, the fact may have been as stated.*

“ Oxford, Feb. 24, 1834.

* “ DEAR SIR,

“ I have now fully ascertained that no record of Goldsmith's admission *ad eundem* exists upon the registers of this university; but I have by no means ascertained that the Poet was not so admitted; on the contrary I incline to believe that the Bishop of Dromore's impression was correct. It is a singular fact that there is a chasm in the Register of Convocation for 1769 from March 14th to March 18th, which was the last day of Lent term, and it is possible certainly that the admission of Goldsmith might have taken place in that interval. I told you I would mention the subject to the venerable President of Magdalen. I have done so, and the result is that he does not remember to have heard any thing relative to Goldsmith's visit to Oxford.

In the middle of May appeared his "Roman History,"* so impatiently expected by the publishers as to have been announced the preceding August. It gives us within the compass of two octavo volumes containing a thousand pages, the history of that state from the earliest period to the fall of the western empire. The preface displays sufficient humility; he disclaims all affectation of new discoveries, or ambition to compete with more laborious writers, while the preliminary advertisements in the newspapers stated it to be, "for the use of schools, and colleges." He likewise informs us, "that there are some subjects, on which a writer must decline all attempts to acquire fame, satisfied with being obscurely useful." But with these modest intimations the book soon took higher ground, and even acquired a degree of reputation beyond perhaps the expectations of the writer. It became the companion not only of the young who could not be induced to peruse more voluminous historians, but of the elder and better informed persons, who wished to grasp at knowledge with the slightest labour, or to renew what had been previously learned, in the shortest form. Books of this kind well executed, are sure to win their own way to public favour. To the applause of the multitude, he added the countenance of the critics, who in a measure anticipated the judgment of Dr. Johnson by using nearly his words in allusion to the author of the Traveller. Some pronounced it "seasonable and well timed," "an excellent digest of the Roman History," and the "most complete abridgment of the kind, for the use of gentlemen, and even of those who are more than cursory readers, that has been yet published." While others, in pointing out errors of haste, or grammar, and defects perhaps inseparable from the plan, admit "that after all, it is better for common readers to be content with the knowledge it contains, than to drudge through the voluminous works of other writers for more;" and pertinently add, "It is surely to be regretted that the author of the Traveller, one of the best poems that has appeared since those of Mr. Pope, should not apply wholly to works of imagination."

The preference given to Goldsmith over Robertson as an historian by Dr. Johnson, Boswell attributes though with no sufficient cause - as far as we know, to his friendship for the former, or some presumed dislike to Scotland, or Scotsmen. Robertson is no doubt an elegant author deserving of all his reputation, who however aims so much at effect in many of his details, that we are tempted to think we have before us rather the orator ambitious of displaying his eloquence, than the simple narrator of past events. He falls likewise into the error of occasionally making speeches for his characters, a practice which if countenanced by antiquity, is scarcely desirable in a modern writer; the substance of the remarks made by eminent persons long dead in particular situations may reach us, but not the

* "This day is published; in two volumes 8vo., Price 10s. 6d. in boards, or 12s. bound. The Roman History; from the foundation of the city of Rome, to the destruction of the Western Empire. Written by Dr. Goldsmith. Printed for S. Baker and C. Leigh in York Street; S. Davies in Russel Street, Covent Garden; and L. Davies, in Holborn." *Public Advertiser*, May 18th, 1769.

precise words, which can be rarely caught in a speech of length; in fact whenever we meet with such, suspicion is apt to arise that the writer may have drawn for the matter as well as the manner, upon his imagination.

Goldsmith's qualities exhibit nothing of labour or pretension; he is brief, natural, and perspicuous, presenting as his chief claim to favour, that charm of ease so difficult to acquire, and which nature bestows only on the favoured few. Had he sat down to the composition of extended history by choice, instead of it being an affair of necessity, as a source of fame to be acquired not as a task to be performed, we cannot doubt from what has been accomplished, that he would have attained great eminence. On this subject Dr. Johnson has given a strong opinion in the comparison drawn between him and Robertson, which if even tinged with prejudice as his biographer insinuates, though without sufficient cause, must have some foundation in truth. We have here at least the grounds of preference stated, and may judge for ourselves of their force; yet it may be fairly inferred from the broad manner in which Goldsmith's deficiencies otherwise are asserted by the great critic on the same occasion, that there is little room for the charge of undue partiality. The conversation took place at the house of Mr. Topham Beauclerk. in April 1773.

Goldsmith being mentioned, Johnson (after some further remarks) said, "Take him as a poet, his 'Traveller' is a very fine performance; ay, and so is his 'Deserted Village,' were it not sometimes too much the echo of his 'Traveller.' Whether indeed we take him as a poet,—as a comic writer,—or as an historian, he stands in the first class." Boswell. "An historian! my dear Sir, you surely will not rank his compilation of the Roman History, with the works of other historians of this age." Johnson. "Why, who are before him?" Boswell. "Hume,—Robertson,—Lord Lyttleton." Johnson (his antipathy against the Scotch beginning to rise). "I have not read Hume; but doubtless Goldsmith's History is better than the *verbiage* of Robertson, or the foppery of Dalrymple." Boswell. "Will you not admit the superiority of Robertson, in whose history we find such penetration, such painting?" Johnson. "Sir, you must consider how that penetration, and that painting, are employed. It is not history, it is imagination. He who describes what he never saw draws from fancy. Robertson paints minds, as Sir Joshua paints faces, in a history-piece; he imagines an heroic countenance. You must look upon Robertson's work as romance, and try it by that standard. History it is not. Besides, Sir, it is the great excellence of a writer, to put into his book as much as his book will hold. Goldsmith has done this in his history. Now Robertson might have put twice as much in his book. Robertson is like a man who has packed gold in wool; the wool takes up more room than the gold. No, Sir; I always thought Robertson would be crushed with his own weight,—would be buried under his own ornaments. Goldsmith tells you shortly all you want to know: Robertson detains you a great deal too long. No man will read Robertson's cumbrous detail a

second time; but Goldsmith's plain narrative will please again and again. I would say to Robertson, what an old tutor of a college said to one of his pupils, 'Read over your compositions, and whenever you meet with a passage which you think is particularly fine, strike it out!' Goldsmith's abridgment is better than that of Lucius Florus, or Eutropius; and I will venture to say that if you compare him with Vertot, in the same places of the Roman History, you will find that he excels Vertot. Sir, he has the art of compiling, and of saying every thing he has to say, in a pleasing manner. He is now writing a Natural History, and will make it as entertaining as a Persian tale."

A translation of the Roman History into French, appeared many years ago; and in 1805, a second with some engravings, and a map after D'Anville. One proof of its immediate success was a new agreement entered into within three weeks of its appearance with the same publishers for a History of England; to extend to four volumes. The following drawn up by himself, is a copy.

" MEMORANDUM.

" Russel Street, Covent Garden.

" It is agreed between Oliver Goldsmith, M. B. on the one hand; and Thomas Davies, bookseller, of Russell Street, Covent Garden, on the other, that Oliver Goldsmith shall write for Thomas Davies an History of England, from the birth of the British empire, to the death of George the Second, in four volumes octavo, of the size and letter of the Roman History, written by Oliver Goldsmith. The said History of England shall be written and compiled in the space of two years from the date hereof. And when the said history is written, and delivered in manuscript, the printer giving his opinion that the quantity above-mentioned is completed, that then Oliver Goldsmith shall be paid by Thomas Davies, the sum of five hundred pounds sterling, for having written and compiled the same. It is agreed also, that Oliver Goldsmith shall print his name to the said work. In witness thereof we have set our names, this 13th of June, 1769.

" OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

" THOMAS DAVIES."

Some of his most agreeable hours at the time, were spent in the family of Captain Horneck, whose lady and daughters, in addition to great personal beauty, secured attention by their elegance and taste from several distinguished men of the time. They first met at the house of Sir Joshua Reynolds who had known Mrs. Horneck in Devonshire, of which country she was a native, when the honest simplicity of Goldsmith, his acknowledged genius and celebrity, and their attractive manners and conversation, induced the desire for greater intimacy on the part of both, which for the remainder of his life continued uninterrupted. After the marriage of one of the young ladies, with the celebrated Henry Bunbury, he became a

frequent guest at their residence, Barton in Suffolk ; here in agreeable society he found relief from the toils of study, and the occasional dissipations of a town life. In this family are preserved some of those familiar verses, which, written in the spirit of whim or good humour, answered the purpose of exciting a smile among those to whom they are addressed. One of these sent about this period, is a reply to an invitation to dinner at Sir George Baker's to meet the Misses Horneck, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Miss Reynolds, Angelica Kauffman, and others, and is jocularly headed, in apology for their extreme homeliness, which renders it necessary to explain what he meant to write—

“ This is a poem ! this is a copy of verses ! ”

It will be found in the Works, and the reader is indebted for it to Major-General Sir Henry Bunbury, Bart.

Several such sportive pieces appear to have been addressed to his acquaintance, of which three or four were known to be extant about 1790, but of which all memory is lost ; others of a more complimentary character, volunteered to compliment his female friends may exist, though few or none can be satisfactorily traced. Of such things it appears he kept no copies, and none were therefore found among his papers ; whatever may be discovered, and we may believe that several still linger among the descendants of former friends, were preserved first from regard, and afterwards by his reputation. Among these we know was the song, now included in his Works, commencing,

“ Ah me ! when shall I marry me ? ”

accidentally preserved by Boswell ; he was fond of the air and procured a copy from the author, who sang it himself in private companies, very agreeably. It was written for the character of Miss Hardcastle, in *She Stoops to Conquer*, but omitted, because Mrs. Bulkley, who performed the part, did not sing.

A copy of verses, addressed to a lady going to Ranelagh, was once in the possession of Mr. Malone, but even during his life was lost in all probability irrecoverably though not by negligence ; he thus alludes to them in a letter, to Bishop Percy, dated June 5th, 1802.

“ I have a strong recollection of having got, I know not how, some verses addressed by Goldsmith, to a lady going to Ranelagh, or going to a masquerade, and of having given them to you for insertion ; but I do not find them any where.” Again, July 20th, he says, “ I cannot recollect what I have done with the unpublished verses of Goldsmith, nor from whom I got them. They remained for a long while folded in the Irish edition of his works, and are there no longer ; so I suppose I have deposited them somewhere so *safely*, that I shall never find them. One often loses things in this way, by too much care.”*

* From Mr. Mason's collection of MS. correspondence.

Several verses affiliated upon him, and supposed to be written about this time, cannot be passed over without notice, though of very questionable origin; no guarantee of authenticity can be found, and this necessarily excludes them from the Works, but the reader may not be displeased to examine their pretensions here.

In the commencement of the present century, a short letter, dated from the Isle of Wight, signed with the letter D. and addressed to the Editor of a Newspaper,* introduced the following lines, as a production of Goldsmith, and they have in consequence been included in some late editions of his works, though the authority being anonymous they are not admitted into that which accompanies these volumes.

"E'en have you seen, bathed in the morning dew,
The budding rose, its infant bloom display;
When first its virgin tints unfold to view,
It shrinks, and scarcely trusts the blaze of day.

"So soft, so delicate, so sweet she came,
Youth's damask glow, just dawning on her cheek,
I gazed, I sigh'd, I caught the tender flame,
Felt the fond pang, and droop'd with passion weak.;"

The author of this communication being unknown, all we have to guide us is internal evidence, which if of any weight in such matters, is against its reputed origin. In the construction of the verses, there is a want of skill which Goldsmith, even in his careless moments, seldom displayed; words are introduced little better than expletives; and the free use made of epithets he not only never practised, but in his critical strictures condemned, as one of the most objectionable peculiarities of modern poetry. This may be seen in the remarks introducing his ballad in the Vicar of Wakefield, and those in the Beauties of English Poesy, prefixed to Gray's Elegy, which he characterizes as "a fine poem, but overloaded with epithets." Neither has he, as far as we know, written any thing else in the elegiac measure, excepting the stanzas on the taking of Quebec.

The succeeding piece is claimed in Ireland for Goldsmith; and in England for Charles Wyndham, Earl of Egremont, who died in 1763.† Its Irish history is as follows. About the year 1769, or

* "Mr. Editor,

"You have my thanks for your early attention to the lines I sent you from Goldsmith, the other day. If you will be equally so by inserting another quotation you will oblige me.

"Yours very sincerely,
"D."

(*Morning Chronicle*, April 3, 1800.)

The previous communication alluded to, was signed "C. D." dated Porchester, and inclosed the song "Oh, Memory! thou fond *intruder!*" the latter word should be *deceiver*; but the reason of the communication does not appear, for the song had been printed in all the editions of his works, and was therefore as well known as his other printed pieces.

† By a correspondent of the *European Magazine*, as the writer was informed by the Rev. Alexander Dyce, whose acquaintance with poetry is known to be extensive; it was thence copied into Park's "Royal and Noble Authors." On examining the *Magazine*, the copy was found deficient in the two first lines; so consequently is the work just mentioned into which it was introduced.

1770, a Mr. Robert Nugent, from Westmeath, a relation it is believed of Lord Clare, being in London, received a copy of it from Goldsmith, who had written the lines upon a young lady, their mutual acquaintance, whom the former particularly admired.

This gentleman on his return to Ireland some time afterwards, met his death by accident, when this among other papers fell into the hands of a person living in the house; but unconnected with the family, and thence passing into those of others, came at length into possession of the late Mr. Edkins, of Dublin. He published it in a collection of inedited Irish poetry, in which is also to be found an early poem of Edmund Burke, which the present writer who procured it from another quarter has printed elsewhere; and a few others of some merit by writers unknown in England. The claim for Goldsmith will be at once disproved if it be found in print before 1757; it resembles his livelier manner, and appears to come from a practised pen, having more finish than an occasional writer of verses, if Lord Egremont was really such, would probably give it.

“THE FAIR THIEF.

“I tell, and tell with truth and grief,
That Chloe is an arrant thief;
Before the urchin well could go,
She stole the whiteness of the snow;
And more, that whiteness to adorn,
She stole the blushes of the morn;
Stole all the sweetness Æther sheds
On primrose banks or violet beds.
Still to conceal her artful wiles,
She stole the Graces’ silken smiles;
’Twas quickly seen she robbed the sky
To plant a star in either eye;
She stole Aurora’s balmy breath,
And pilfered orient pearls for teeth;
The cherry dipp’d in morning dew,
Gave moisture to her lips and hue.
“These were the infant spoils; a store
To which in time she pilfered more;
At twelve she stole from Cyprus’ Queen
Her air and love-commanding mien;
Stole Juno’s dignity, and stole
From Pallas sense to charm the soul.
She sung;—the Syrens all appear’d,
And warbling—she stole all she heard.
She play’d;—the Muses from their hill
Wonder’d who thus had stolen their skill
Apollo’s wit was next her prey,
Her next the beams that brighten day.
Great Jove her pilferings to crown,
Pronounced these treasures all her own;
Pardoned her crimes and praised her art,
And—t’other day she stole my heart.
“Cupid, if lovers are your care,
Exert your power on this fair,
To trial bring her stolen charms,
And let her prison be—my arms.”

The following verses rest chiefly on the authority of the late Mr. Quick, the comedian. When applied to a few years ago on the subject of Goldsmith he mentioned among other things, the Poet having written two or three songs for Mrs. Pinto, formerly Miss Brent, between 1766 and 1768, which he had seen printed in a magazine, and also in a collection of songs published as he believed by one of the Newberys; one of these publications has been traced, but it may be doubted whether either of the pieces stand as he wrote them.

SONG.

"Love's a fever of the mind,
Kindling fierce consuming fires,
Sweet its first approach we find,
Raising new and soft desires.

"Soon it fills with hopes and fears.
Sighs and tremblings break the rest,
Glowing wishes, wasting tears,
Night and day distract the breast."

SONG.

"How softly the zephyrs awaken the grove,
In this season the Spring both of nature and love;
Yet let no delights on our moments intrude,
But such as are simple and such as are good.

"Far hence be the love that's by wantonness bred,
Or pleasures by folly or vanity fed;
But joy's which both reason and virtue approve,
We hail as the charm and the pride of the grove."

Of a still more apocryphal character are the verses first printed in an Irish magazine, it is believed Exshaw's (for the work, since the transcription was made, has been mislaid,) and said to have been transmitted to a friend in that country in 1769. They seem a tissue of imitations, disconnected and obscure in subject, thrown out as the germ of thoughts rather than thoughts developed, or made intelligible; and this probably gave origin to the rumour of their having constituted part of the first rude draught of portions of the *Deserted Village*, altered by the author nearly as soon as written, but afterwards strung together by some admirer of more zeal than judgment who saved the manuscript. An examination of these lines can leave no doubt they are spurious; but being published as his, the reader might be tempted to suppose, were he to meet them elsewhere, that the omission arose from their being unknown to the writer. They will be found beneath.*

• "VERSES

"Addressed to a Friend in 1769;

"BY OLIVER GOLDSMITH, M. B.

"O firm in virtue, as of soul sincere,
Loved by the Muse to friendship ever dear!

In September he received a large advance of money on the faith of the Natural History being diligently proceeded with, from the publisher with whom the agreement had been made, no less than five volumes being paid for, although from the short time elapsed

Among the thousand ills of thousand climes,
To name the worst that loads the worst of times,
Is sure a task unpleasing to pursue,
Trackless the maze, uncertain is the clew;
The ruling passion still by all confess'd,
The master key that opes the human breast
Here fails; this darling child of nature's school,
Submits to custom's more resistless rule.

"Should I recount the vast and various train,
Who own but vice or folly's motley reign;
A heedless multitude, a giddy throng,
The theme of satire and the scorn of song;
To scan their wild excesses, or to name
Their crimes, would put the modest muse to shame;
Yet may her power endeavour to control,
That leading vice which animates the whole.

"While chief among the dissipated train,
Who shall insidious luxury disdain?
Alas! what refuge can fair virtue find?
The soul corrupt what laws or ties can bind?
Used to deceive and tutor'd to beguile,
Death in her charms and ruin in her smile;
Like some trim harlot who our love demands,
And binds our youth in Philistean bands,—
'Tis she that bids enervate arts arise,
That swells the dome to emulate the skies;
That fills the city and the crowded port,
And bids her thousands to the mart resort.
While meager want, resistless fiend! invades
The rural seats and hospitable shades;
While the poor peasant the sad change deploras,
In secret pines, or quits his native shores;
Seeks better seats in other climes to gain,
And dares for bread the savage and the main.

"Is not refinement still the source of care,
E'en to the best that breathe the vital air?
E'en learning's self corrupted by her art,
The mind enlarging oft corrupts the heart;
How small the gain improvement can bestow,
When taste refined but brings refined woe!

"Simplicity! adored, celestial maid,
Still at thy shrine my constant vows are paid;
Do thou and Nature still direct my way,
Guides whom I seek and own thy sovereign sway.
Nor let the great, or gay, or rich, despise
The humbler blessings from thy reign that rise;
No joys like thine from pomp or learning springs,
The boast of schoolmen or the pride of kings!

"What if we rove where rigid winter reigns,
O'er Zembla's wastes, or Lapland's dreary plains;
Where luxury has no soft art display'd,
No meretricious lures as yet array'd;
Where no choice stores the sterile lands afford,
But just can rear the rein deer and his lord.—
O'er moss-grown deserts *these* content to stray,
Those wait in caves the wish'd return of day.
Yet nature feeds them and alike they prove,
The gracious hand of all sustaining love.

since the agreement, not more than one, or perhaps not even one, was completed. The cause probably arose from being pressed for repayment of the amount of money which he had borrowed (said to be 400*l.*) to take and furnish his chambers; the acknowledgment to the bookseller is in his own handwriting.*

"Received, September 26th, 1769, of William Griffin the sum of five hundred guineas for the copyright of the first five volumes of my Natural History, as by agreement; and for which I promise an assignment on demand.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"No. 2, Brick Court, Temple."

Griffin, it appears, not being a wealthy man, was enabled to advance the money only by disposing at first of half the property and finally of the whole, though as it seems without increase of profit, to another bookseller named Nourse, who eventually became its sole possessor and publisher. The various receipts and agreements connected with this transfer are still extant, and for the information of the reader curious in such matters, one or two of the first and last are subjoined.†

"How sparkles joy in every savage face,
When brightening morn invites them to the chase !
Well may their hearts with purest transports glow,
If few their wants, so small their source of wo ;
While wealth's soft sons, a hapless race, remain,
Nursed in the lap of ease to many a pain ;
Ev'n in enjoyments pine their hours away,
And of those joys they sought become the prey ;
When for the slothful couch they quit the field,
Where various labours health and comfort yield,
Till life's dull day with many a cloud o'ercast,
Gives but the wish its hated hour were past."

* * * * *

* In the collection of William Upcott, Esq.

† "Sept. 23d, 1769.

"Received of Mr. Nourse one hundred pounds on account for the Copy Money of his half share of Goldsmith's Natural History.

"£100...0...0.

"WM. GRIFFIN."

"Sept. 26th, 1769.

"Received of Mr. Nourse one hundred and sixty-two pounds ten shillings for his share of the five volumes of the Copy Money for Dr. Goldsmith's Natural History.

"£162...10...0.

"WM. GRIFFIN."

"June 22d, 1772.

"Received of Mr. John Nourse fifty pounds on account of the Eighth Volume of Dr. Goldsmith's Natural History.

"£50...0...0.

"WM. GRIFFIN."

"June 30th, 1772.

"Received of Mr. John Nourse fifty-five pounds being the last payment for the Eighth Volume of Dr. Goldsmith's History of Animated Nature, and in full for that Work.

"£55...0...0.

"WM. GRIFFIN."

These, and a general receipt of this date on the back of the assignment from

Toward the end of the preceding year (1768,) the Royal Academy had been instituted. "His Majesty," according to a long account of the proceedings which appeared at the time, "ever ready to encourage useful improvements, and always intent upon promoting every branch of polite knowledge, hath been graciously pleased to institute in this metropolis a Royal Academy of Arts, to be under his own immediate patronage, and under the direction of forty artists of the first rank in their several professions."* A list of the official officers of the institution is added to the statement; those which were merely honorary were added afterwards, and became known from the following announcement in December of this year, 1769.†—"Dr. Johnson is appointed Professor of Ancient Literature, and Dr. Goldsmith Professor of History to the Royal Academy. These titles are merely honorary, no salary being annexed to them." Both nominations were made through the intervention of Reynolds, and imparted to the Institution which had the honour of reckoning such men among her officers, certainly not less honour than the individuals enjoyed by the appointment; these offices gave the privilege merely of a seat at the occasional meetings, and at the annual dinner of the Academicians.

To this appointment allusion is made in the following letter, written to one of his brothers in the ensuing month. A small legacy had been left him by his good uncle Contarine, whose death would appear to have taken place shortly before; and in disposing of it, we find allusions to his own situation and that of his "shattered family," for whom, being without provision or power himself, he could do nothing. To the original of this letter there was annexed a receipt, showing that 15*l.* had been paid to Maurice Goldsmith for a bequest of the late Rev. Thos. Contarine to Oliver Goldsmith, dated 4th Feb. 1770.

"To Mr. Maurice Goldsmith, at James Lawder's, Esq., at Kilmore, near Carrick-on-Shannon.

"January, 1770.

"DEAR BROTHER,

"I should have answered your letter sooner, but in truth I am not fond of thinking of the necessities of those I love, when it is so very little in my power to help them. I am sorry to find you are every way unprovided for; and what adds to my uneasiness is, that I have received a letter from my sister Johnson by which I learn that she is pretty much in the same circumstances. As to myself, I believe I could get both you and my poor brother-in-law something like that which you desire, but I am determined never to ask for little things, nor exhaust any little interest I may have, until I can serve you, him, and myself more effectually. As yet no opportunity has of-

Griffin, making the property solely that of Nourse, are in the possession of Mr. Upcott.

* Public Advertiser, December 20th, 1768.

† Public Advertiser, December 22d, 1769.

ferred, but I believe you are pretty well convinced that I will not be remiss when it arrives.

"The King has lately been pleased to make me professor of Ancient History in a Royal Academy of Painting, which he has just established, but there is no salary annexed; and I took it rather as a compliment to the institution than any benefit to myself. Honours to one in my situation, are something like ruffles to one that wants a shirt.

"You tell me that there are fourteen or fifteen pounds left me in the hands of my cousin Lawder, and you ask me what I would have done with them. My dear brother, I would by no means give any directions to my dear worthy relations at Kilmore, how to dispose of money, which is, properly speaking, more theirs than mine. All that I can say is, that I entirely, and this letter will serve to witness, give up any right and title to it; and I am sure they will dispose of it to the best advantage. To them I entirely leave it; whether they or you may think the whole necessary to fit you out, or whether our poor sister Johnson may not want the half, I leave entirely to their and your discretion. The kindness of that good couple to our shattered family demands our sincerest gratitude; and though they have almost forgot me, yet if good things at last arrive, I hope one day to return and increase their good humour by adding to my own.

"I have sent my cousin Jenny a miniature picture of myself, as I believe it is the most acceptable present I can offer. I have ordered it to be left for her at George Faulkner's, folded in a letter. The face you well know is ugly enough, but it is finely painted. I will shortly also send my friends over the Shannon some Mezzotinto prints of myself, and some more of my friends here, such as Burke, Johnson, Reynolds, and Coleman. I believe I have written a hundred letters to different friends in your country, and never received an answer to any of them. I do not know how to account for this, or why they are unwilling to keep up for me those regards which I must ever retain for them.

"If then you have a mind to oblige me you will write often, whether I answer you or not. Let me particularly have the news of our family and old acquaintances. For instance, you may begin by telling me about the family where you reside, how they spend their time, and whether they ever make mention of me. Tell me about my mother, my brother Hodson and his son;* by brother Harry's son and daughter, my sister Johnson, the family of Ballyoughter, what is become of them, where they live, and how they do. You talked of being my only brother.—I don't understand you. Where is Charles? A sheet of paper occasionally filled with the news of this kind would make me very happy, and would keep you nearer my mind. As it is, my dear brother, believe me to be

"Yours most affectionately,

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

* It is remarkable that he does not mention his sister Mrs. Hodson; the omission seems to imply the continuance of some disagreement which there are several reasons for suspecting had existed from an early period.

Maurice, who it will be remembered was a younger brother, had been brought up to no occupation, but found support in occasional visits to his relatives. He was at this period, the inmate of Mr. Lawder, who it has been mentioned had married his cousin Miss Contarine, and the fitting out mentioned in his brother's letter, alludes to a project for trying his fortune in some capacity abroad. This, from disinclination, or that indolence arising from want of fixed occupation and not turning the mind of youth to some specific pursuit at an earlier period of life, was relinquished; and having some time afterwards complained to the Poet that he found it difficult to live like a gentleman, was told by him in reply, by all means to quit such an unprofitable calling, and betake himself to some handicraft employment. This advice as the most suited to his education and habits was adopted; he bound himself to a cabinet-maker in Drumsna in the county of Leitrim; and afterwards removing to Dublin, kept a shop many years in Hendrick Street.* He partook of the peculiarities of the family; was honest, good-humoured, social, giddy, and careless; and the possession of such qualities seldom indicates a prosperous tradesman. Bishop Percy discovered him labouring in poverty about 1785, and to relieve his wants, which appear to have been urgent, first projected that edition of his brother's works, which failed in its immediate object by not appearing till long after his death. His situation is thus described by that prelate in a letter written to Malone from Dublin, June 16th, 1785.

"He (Goldsmith) has an only brother living, a cabinet-maker, who has been a decent tradesman, a very honest, worthy man, but he has been very unfortunate, and is at this time in great indigence. It has occurred to such of us here as were acquainted with the doctor, to print an edition of his poems chiefly under the direction of the Bishop of Killaloe and myself, and prefix a new, correct life of the author, for the poor man's benefit, and to get you and Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mr. Steevens, &c., to recommend the same in England; especially among the members of the club." After a lengthened detail of the best mode of negotiating this work with the booksellers, and pushing it among the former friends of the Poet, he thus concludes a subject which much interested him:—"If we can but subsist this poor man at present, and relieve him from immediate indigence, Mr. Orde our Secretary of State has given us hope that he will procure him some little place that will make him easy for life; and thus we will have shown our regard for the departed bard by relieving his only brother, and so far as I hear, the only one of his family that wants relief."

"In the meantime," he writes in the following year, 1786, Oct. 17th, "I must entreat you to exert all your influence among the gentlemen of the club, and particularly urge it to Joshua Reynolds,

* As the relatives of eminent men derive some importance from their connexion, so honest Maurice is still mentioned in Drumsna, and a table of his workmanship shown to strangers; as the writer is informed by one who, as having a large share of genius himself, takes an interest in all that relates to the genius of a mutual country, Mr. Charles Phillips.

to procure subscriptions for the present relief of poor Maurice Goldsmith, who is suffering great penury and distress, being not only poor, but very unhealthy. I procured him a present supply of between thirty and forty guineas last year; but I fear his creditors did not suffer much of that money to remain with him. Their demands being so far satisfied, further relief would probably reach himself and remain with him to his great comfort. Our new Society of Arts and Sciences* have made him mace-bearer; but without present subsistence, I fear he will not live to derive the future emoluments. A guinea a-piece from the members of the club would be a great relief to him."

It evinces the little attention paid to claims of this kind, that no subscription even at the moderate amount of a guinea, could be procured from members of the club, most of whom it may be presumed could sufficiently afford so moderate a tax upon their generosity. Malone in a packet of MS. correspondence submitted to the writer, complains much of this difficulty; and also of the backwardness which he found to pay the amount nominally subscribed by the members on another matter, namely for the monument to Dr. Johnson. When the works of Goldsmith at length appeared, and he was written to by the bishop to dispose of a copy to each member, the same objection of the difficulty of getting the sale price occurred; on mentioning the matter at the club dinner, several talked vaguely about it, but only one actually produced his contribution, and without others had done the same on the instant, Malone who was zealous in the business adds, it would be useless to send the books, as payment would be forgotten, and it would be impossible to *press gentlemen for money*.

Maurice however was not wholly neglected in Ireland—"I reminded Mr. Orde," writes the bishop, Feb. 12th, 1787, "to-day of his promise to give some little place to Goldsmith's poor brother, and he kindly engaged to do something for him soon. In the meantime however the poor creature is starving. Lord Charlemont made him mace-bearer to the Academy, but he has yet got no salary.

The object was at length accomplished.—"Mr. Orde," says the prelate, April 14th 1787, "has lately done a handsome thing which ought to be mentioned to his honour, and we have accordingly reported it in the Freeman's Journal. He has given a snug little place in the License Office to Maurice Goldsmith, in honour of his brother's literary merit, which with the mace-bearer's office in the Royal Academy, and the money we hope to get by subscription to his brother's works, we hope will make the poor man easy for life."†

This situation he filled with integrity and diligence, and became the means of discovering a fraud upon the revenue, from which had he been of a different character, considerable personal advantages might have been derived. He visited London shortly after his

* Royal Irish Academy, then recently instituted.

† From MS. correspondence obligingly supplied by Dr. H. U. Thomson.

brother's death, of which notice will be hereafter taken, and died in the latter part of 1792 without issue, his widow who survived many years having afterwards married a person named Macdonnell. His death is thus mentioned by Dr. Thos. Campbell in a letter to Bishop Percy in allusion to their joint endeavours for his benefit, dated June 12th, 1793:—"I am glad to hear that you have brought the affair of Goldsmith to so good an issue—but, alas! poor Maurice. He is to receive no comfort from your Lordship's labours in his behalf. He departed from a miserable life early last winter and luckily has left no children."

CHAPTER XIX.

His Dress.—Baretti.—Percival Stockdale.—Deserted Village.—Its Localities taken from his Father's Residence.

TOWARDS the conclusion of 1769 and the commencement of the following year, his literary occupations appear to have been multifarious. By his engagement with Griffin, he should seem to have been employed on the *Natural History*; by that with Davies, upon the *History of England*; he was avowedly at work in finishing and polishing the *Deserted Village*, for two advertisements stating its speedy publication appeared in November;* and these were followed in a few days, by similar announcements of a new edition being in preparation, of the "*Poems of Dr. Parnell, with a life of the author by Dr. Goldsmith.*"† With the respective publishers it seemed to be a struggle, who should have the credit, or advantage, of first ushering his writings into the world.

An amusing anecdote of his taste in dress at this moment is told by Boswell, who having just returned from the Stratford Jubilee, where he had incurred no little ridicule by exhibiting himself in the character of a Corsican, by publicly reciting verses upon the occasion,‡ and by wearing the placard of "*Corsica Boswell*" in his hat, was willing perhaps to conceal his own follies, by pointing out what he considered those of his acquaintance. He had invited Goldsmith, Johnson, Reynolds, Garrick and others to dinner, when the party were kept waiting by the non-arrival of one of the guests. "*Goldsmith*" (in the words of the biographer, who however seems to overcharge the description,) "to divert the tedious minutes, strutted about bragging of his dress, and I believe was seriously vain of it, for his mind was wonderfully prone to such impressions. 'Come,

* *Public Advertiser*, Nov. 16th—17th, 1769.

† *Id.* Nov. 22d—27th, 1769.

‡ *Public Advertiser*, Sept. 11th, 1769.—*Croker's Boswell's Johnson*, vol. ii. p. 71.

come, (said Garrick,) talk no more of that. You are perhaps the worst—eh, eh?" Goldsmith was eagerly attempting to interrupt him, when Garrick went on laughing ironically. 'Nay, you will always *look* like a gentleman; but I am talking of being well or *ill drest*.' 'Well, let me tell you (said Goldsmith,) when my tailor brought home my bloom-coloured coat, he said, 'Sir I have a favour to beg of you, when any body asks you who made your clothes, be pleased to mention John Filby at the Harrow in Water-Lane.' Johnson: 'Why, Sir, that was because he knew the strange colour would attract crowds to gaze at it, and thus they might hear of him, and see how well he could make a coat of so absurd a colour.'

The date of this dinner, October 16th, is creditable to Boswell's accuracy, as on reference to the tailor's account books already mentioned, it appears that a new suit of clothes of an expensive kind, is charged to Goldsmith on that day; the entry terms it "a half dress suit of ratteen, lined with silk," and the price twelve guineas. But his dress has been so often alluded to by contemporaries who either wrote or spoke of him, that it may amuse the reader and assist the future antiquary in tracing the fleeting and most changeable peculiarities of our garb, to subjoin a few of his bills.* By these it clearly appears he was by no means an economist in the article of dress any more than in other matters; yet the obligations thus incurred were pretty punctually paid until a short time before his death, at which period he proved to be 79*l.* in debt, and this appears to have been lost to the tradesman, the remark of whose son shows their joint

* "Mr. Oliver Goldsmith, Dr.

Brick Court, Temple, No. 2, up two pair of stairs.

1767.	Brought from fol. 26,	-	-	-	-	£25	19	2½
March 4.	To superfine suit complete	-	-	-	-	6	0	9
June 19.	To suit complete	-	-	-	-	6	1	6
Sept. 8.	To superfine cloth breeches	-	-	-	-	1	2	0
Oct. 2.	To suit of state mourning	-	-	-	-	6	8	9
Dec. 26.	To black thickset breeches	-	-	-	-	1	1	0
28.	To superfine frock suit	-	-	-	-	5	12	0
						£52	5	2½

(Paid by a draft on Griffin, Feb. 6, 1768.

1768.					
Jan.	21.	To Tyrian bloom satin grain and garter blue	}	£ 8	2 7
		silk breeches - - - - -			
Merch	17.	To suit of clothes — colour, lined with silk,	}	9	7 0
		and gold buttons - - - - -			
June	16.	To suit of mourning - - - - -		5	12 6
July	22.	To 2 yards of green livery cloth - - -		1	2 0
Aug.	29.	To suit cleaned - - - - -		0	6 0
Sept.	24.	To coat and waistcoat cleaned and made up -		0	14 0
	30.	To fine worsted breeches - - - - -		1	0 0
Nov.	29.	To suit of grain mixture - - - - -		5	14 6
		To man - - - - -		0	1 0
				<hr/> £31 19 7	

opinion of the debtor:—"My father, though a loser to that amount, attributed no blame to Goldsmith; he had been a good customer;

(Paid Oct. 9, 1769, by a note on Mr. Griffin three months after date for £33..0.0.)

1769.

Jan.	6.	To calico waistcoats	-	-	-	£0	7	0
Feb.	9.	To suit of clothes	-	-	-	8	14	8
	11.	To altering two pair of breeches for man	-	-	-	0	2	0
	17.	To mending ditto	-	-	-	0	1	6
Sept.	19.	To pair of silk breeches	-	-	-	2	3	0
	24.	To making frock suit of cloth	-	-	-	6	3	9
Oct.	16.	To making a half-dress suit of ratteen, lined with satin	-	-	-	12	12	0
		To pair of silk stocking breeches	-	-	-	2	5	0
		To a pair of bloom-coloured ditto	-	-	-	1	4	6

1770.

April	21.	To Bath coating surtout	-	-	-	1	10	0
		To dress suit	-	-	-	9	19	3
May	3.	To suit	-	-	-	5	17	7 $\frac{3}{4}$
July	4.	To suit	-	-	-	7	13	9
Sept.	8.	To suit of mourning	-	-	-	5	12	0
						£63	6	0 $\frac{3}{4}$

(Paid £40 February 8, 1771, by a note of hand on Mr. Thos. Davies; and £23 Oct. 2d, by part of a note of hand on Griffin.)

1771.

Jan.	3.	To clothes' scouring and mending and pressing	-	-	-	0	4	6
	3.	To pair of best silk stocking breeches	-	-	-	2	5	6
	24.	To suit of clothes, lined with silk, gold buttons, &c.	-	-	-	9	17	6
Feb.	8.	To best silk breeches	-	-	-	2	5	6
April	11.	To frock suit, lined with (<i>illegible</i>) half trimmed with } gold sprig buttons	-	-	-	8	13	5
	17.	To Queen's-blue dress suit	-	-	-	11	17	0
Oct.	3.	To suit, plain	-	-	-	5	13	0
Dec.	5.	To silk breeches	-	-	-	2	2	9
		To jobs, mending, &c.	-	-	-	0	5	0

1772.

Jan.	4.	To half-trimmed frock suit	-	-	-	5	15	0
	31.	To suit of mourning	-	-	-	5	12	0
March	18.	To fine ratteen surtout, in grain	-	-	-	3	5	6
April	28.	To Princess stuff breeches	-	-	-	1	7	0
May	1.	To superfine cloth ditto	-	-	-	1	3	0
	2.	To suit of livery	-	-	-	4	10	6
	5.	To ditto frock and waistcoat	-	-	-	2	12	6
		To jacket	-	-	-	1	1	0
	21.	To your blue velvet suit	-	-	-	21	10	9
		To crimson collar for man	-	-	-	0	2	6
June	8.	To altering two coats	-	-	-	0	3	0
	19.	To velvet suit new-coloured	-	-	-	1	1	0
July	18.	To mending, &c.	-	-	-	0	2	6
Nov.	13.	To making velvet waistcoat	-	-	-	1	1	0
Dec.	17.	To jobs, &c.	-	-	-	1	5	8

1773.

March	4.	To Princess stuff breeches	-	-	-	1	7	6
	11.	To suit	-	-	-	10	0	0
April	12.	To mending, &c.	-	-	-	0	1	6
May	7.	To velvet waistcoat, cleaning, &c.	-	-	-	0	15	9
	10.	To altering suit, and for serge de soy for waistcoat and } skirts, &c.	-	-	-	0	12	6
	13.	To rich straw silk tamboured waistcoat	-	-	-	4	4	0
June	2.	Tamboured waistcoat cleaned	-	-	-	0	1	6
		To green half-trimmed frock and breeches, lined with } silk, &c. &c.	-	-	-	6	0	0

and had he lived would have paid every farthing." Half the sum owing by him was for clothes supplied to his nephew Hodson, of which he had taken upon himself the payment.

A few days previous to the dinner at Boswell's, his good nature was shown on an occasion when the assistance of zealous friends is most kind, and is most wanted, towards a person for whom he had nevertheless no cordial regard. This was Baretti; whose name is sufficiently familiar to readers of the literary history of the day. He had been, as is well known, apprehended for the death of a man killed in a brawl in the street, when Goldsmith hearing of his misfortune hurried next morning before the committing magistrate, and bail being at first refused, accompanied him to Newgate, offering likewise the free use of his purse towards his subsistence and defence. This conduct exemplifies that benevolent impulse of which he has conveyed a better idea in a line, than others perhaps could accomplish in a paragraph—

"His pity gave ere charity began."

He did not admire Baretti, and Baretti knew and resented the slight; Goldsmith had formed a low estimate of the literature and morals of Italy from what he had seen during his stay in that country, and this opinion of the nation at large extended to several individuals settled in England. He thought that Baretti and Martinella, another literary adventurer of the same nation, were over-estimated by their literary acquaintance; that with some talents and learning, and a great deal of pretension, a degree of consideration had been awarded them, denied to many of our countrymen of equal or superior attainments; that good-nature towards foreigners had, as is some-

1771

June 2.	To silver grey silk tamboured waistcoat	-	-	4	0	0
17.	To fine brown cambric waistcoat, tamboured	-	-	2	1	6
	Mr. Hodson's bill per order	-	-	35	3	0
Bill delivered				£153	4	6

(Of this, £50 was paid the 5th April, and £60 the 14th September, 1773.)

		Balance	-	-	£48	4	6
July 23.	To tamboured buff waistcoat cleaned and great coat ditto	-	-	-	0	4	0
Sept. 23.	To under waistcoat	-	-	-	0	5	9
Oct. 2.	To Princess stuff breeches	-	-	-	1	7	0
8.	To suit of clothes	-	-	-	9	15	6
16.	To stuff waistcoat	-	-	-	1	9	0
Dec. 3.	To mending, &c.	-	-	-	0	5	9
	To great coat	-	-	-	2	19	3
8.	To suit	-	-	-	5	13	0
18.	To stuff breeches	-	-	-	1	7	6
24.	To flannel waistcoat with sleeves	-	-	-	0	8	0
					£71	18	3

1774

March 18.	To suit	-	-	-	7	14	9
					£79	13	0

times the case in England, assigned them the places due only to distinguished merit. He disliked Baretti also from an impression that he contemned religion; and on this subject talking once to Mr. Ridge, whose name occurs in *Retaliation*, is said to have observed, "I never feel confidence in such men; I am far from being what I ought to be, or what I wish to be; but whatever be my follies my mind has never been tainted by unbelief."*

Among his acquaintance, occasioned by the publication of the *Aminta* of Tasso, in April 1770, appears to have been its translator, the Rev. Percival Stockdale, who having been an officer in the army, relinquished it for the church; accepted a curacy in London, where he figured variously, and with some success as poet, reviewer, and miscellaneous writer; became then a chaplain in the navy; and after a life of many changes of scene, finally settled on the living of Lesbury in Northumberland, on the presentation of Lord Thurlow, where his attachment to literature continued to be displayed. His productions were of various merit; the best perhaps is "The Poet," a poem published in 1773. The last, his "Memoirs" in 1809, exhibit a querulous and discontented spirit. His character seems to have been ardent, vain, and versatile; and thinking more highly of his own genius for poetry than he could persuade the world to believe, was disappointed and soured by not acquiring that distinction to which he thought his talents were entitled. During his career in London he enjoyed the friendship of Dr. Johnson, who in allusion to his obvious vanity and anxieties on the subject of his writings, is believed to have applied to him the observation recorded by Boswell, "Sir, there is not a young sapling upon Parnassus, more severely blown about by every wind of criticism than that poor fellow."†

His autobiography, said to be incorrect in several of its statements, particularly that where he represents himself as being originally engaged to write the lives of the poets instead of Dr. Johnson, furnishes scarcely an allusion to Goldsmith. His papers however supply an anecdote communicated by a lady eminent for her writings in fiction, his friend, and whom the writer has likewise the honour to number among his acquaintance, Miss Jane Porter, who having spent some time at the vicarage of Lesbury preserves a warm regard for the memory of her then venerable host. The story is not very complimentary to the personal appearance of the poet, though possibly heightened by Mr. Stockdale in the telling; and may have been suggested by an anecdote something similar, of a stranger mistaking him for an inferior kind of person, mentioned by Miss Reynolds.

* Baretti was acquitted of the charge. It is rarely that names of equal celebrity with the following are to be found as guarantees for the personal appearance of a prisoner arraigned on such a charge.—"On Friday Sir Joshua Reynolds, William Fitzherbert, Esq., Edmund Burke, Esq., and David Garrick, Esq., gave bail before Lord Mansfield for Mr. Joseph Baretti's appearance at the ensuing sessions." (*Public Advertiser*, Oct. 16th, 1769.) Dr. Johnson's interest was exerted to procure this array of names.

† Mr. Croker's edition, vol. v. p. 215.

"About this period," writes Miss Porter in her communication, "a circumstance rather ludicrous occurred relative to Goldsmith, which I shall copy from Mr. Stockdale's own account of the matter; I having occupied much of my time, while visiting the Vicar of Lesbury, in transcribing from his biographical note-book.

"Oliver Goldsmith was a feeling and an elegant writer both in poetry and in prose, but especially in the former species of composition. My first acquaintance with him commenced at Davies the bookseller's, where I dined in his company, and was much struck by the opposition between the beauty of his mind and the mean appearance of his person and manner. A few days after this, and soon after my friend Davies had published my translation of Tasso's *Aminta*, I called on him one afternoon, and was with him in his parlour when Dr. Goldsmith entered; and remaining with us conversed most agreeably for about an hour. Just before he had joined us, Davies asked me what I thought of some of his party at the dinner he had given me, and among these he mentioned the poet of the 'Deserted Village.' I replied that I held his genius in due estimation, but that I had never seen a man look more like a tailor. This was fresh in our heads when Goldsmith entered, and before he left us he desired our friend the bookseller to let him have my translation of the *Aminta*. As he put it into his pocket he turned to me and said, 'Mr. Stockdale, I shall soon take measure of you.'—I observed with a smile I could not repress, that 'I hoped he would not pinch me.' From what had passed before he came in and afterwards, Davies and I, as soon as he quitted the house, gave a full indulgence to our risible faculties; the odd coincidence of Goldsmith's metaphor and my comparison having been quite irresistible."*

* Miss Porter adds some anecdotes of this gentleman, whom she knew in the decline of life and saw reason to esteem, which do honour to her friendship, although the object of it has not acquired from critical judgments the honours he is disposed to assume on account of his literary merits.

"The Reverend Percival Stockdale was a literary worthy of the days of Dr. Johnson, and not only enjoyed his intimacy, but that of several others of the distinguished men of the time, Lord Lyttleton, Burke, Garrick, and many more who kept up with him an occasional correspondence. I remember his showing some of their letters to me during a visit to Lesbury in his latter years, and he then said with much emphatic feeling (for his character was all energy to his latest page and hour) 'I am proud, and ever will be proud of such honours from such men. I will preserve them as a miser would his gold till I die, and then will resign them to some elegant and distinguished soul who may be worthy of them.' These letters he afterwards did me the honour of saying should be mine on his decease; and by the tenor of his will which named me residuary legatee, the possession of such cherished memorials was anticipated. But on the amount of the legacies to other persons falling short, the residuary legatee lost even these few relics of her venerable friend; they being sold, with every thing else of his personals, to complete the sum for the legacies. Who purchased them I never heard.

"He was in London during the spring and vigour of life, and some of his works were supposed to possess great merit; the tragedy of *Ximenes* he told me was thought to approach in merit Addison's *Cato*. It was in the library of Garrick at his beautiful villa on the banks of the Thames that Mr. Stockdale conceived the idea of writing another of his most esteemed works, his *Vindication of the Genius of Pope*. It was excited by his chancing to peruse in that library Warton's 'Essay

Towards the end of May 1770,* the *Deserted Village*, announced so long before as being in preparation, appeared, and at once obtained a place in popular esteem though not perhaps with the critics, superior even to that of the *Traveller*. On the seventh of June came out a second edition; on the fourteenth a third; on the twenty-eighth a fourth; and on the sixteenth of August a fifth, being a run of success such as few poems of the time had experienced within so short a period. The journals devoted to literature hailed it with the warmest applause; the author was gratified by his good fortune; the public pleased by the addition made to its sources of pleasure; and if some of the newspaper writers used their customary privilege of finding fault on some unimportant points, others were as loud in its praise; and attention was more drawn to a work which possessed merit enough to find a few enemies among a multitude of friends.

The previous reputation of the author as a man of unquestioned genius, tended no doubt to aid its immediate rise into notice; but in addition to intrinsic merits there were other causes which had effect in accelerating its success. The subject was domestic; the supposed evils to which it adverted, easy of comprehension; the scenes and incidents, more particularly those allusive to youth, such as almost all men have participated in and fondly remember; while the characters were of that familiar description that we could easily believe we had seen or known the individuals, and they came therefore before us with all the claims of old friends. The feelings were interest-

on the *Writings and Genius of Pope*, which by derogating from the powers of the bard of Twickenham, so provoked the young poet of the Tweed, that as he said he 'threw out this volunteer of his heart, with all the force of indignant justice.' A day or two after its publication he happened to meet Mr. Burke, who instantly took him by the arm and entered on the subject of the vindication with great spirit and commendation. 'Stockdale,' said he, 'you write with great fire and with a poet's light into your subject which falls to the lot of very few men. But I wish you had been a little more sparing of my friend Warton.'

"In the same week he received a similar suffrage from Dr. Johnson, through a mutual acquaintance, Mr. Thomas Davies the bookseller. The latter, on Mr. Stockdale entering his shop one morning, ardently took him by the hand exclaiming 'I give you joy.' 'Of what?' returned the young Poet. 'Of the high praise which Dr. Johnson has bestowed on your defence of Pope. I drank tea with him yesterday; the whole of the usual Sunday evening party were there; he read a great part of your observations, though so severe against poor Warton, aloud to us, and observed as he went along 'Stockey is perfectly right; he has defended the cause of Pope with incontrovertible arguments and a most victorious eloquence. He must be supported in this worthy act of justice to that great poet.' Mr. Stockdale even at 70 years of age when he told me this anecdote with sparkling eyes exclaimed, 'He must have been made of more phlegmatic stuff than that of which I was composed who would not have taken fresh fire from such commendation.'

"Amongst the early productions of Mr. Stockdale was his '*Life of Waller*,' who like himself had been a soldier and a poet; and Dr. Johnson thought so well of it, that when he was writing his *Lives of the Poets* he took the opportunity of making honourable mention of it."

* "This day, at twelve, will be published, price two shillings—*The Deserted Village*, a Poem. By Dr. Goldsmith. Printed for W. Griffin, at Garrick's Head in Catherine Street, Strand."—*Public Advertiser*, May 26, 1770.

In the memoir prefixed to the *Miscellaneous Works*, the date of the poem is said to be 1769; an error that escaped Bishop Percy, the Rev. Mr. Boyd, and Mr. Rose.

ed by a tale of grievances so eloquently and pathetically lamented, although few as he admits in his preface, had seen or could believe the fact of their existence. The distresses of the poor and their supposed oppression by the rich, which whether true or otherwise is ever a popular theme, on this occasion enlisted all the generous feelings on the side of their advocate. By designing men this is sometimes made a source of mischief by nurturing something of unjust prejudice among such as are lower in the scale of wealth against those who are higher; by Goldsmith it was merely another evidence of that amiable yet morbid sensibility which kept him in all his writings tremblingly alive to any scene or tale of distress in the humbler classes of life. There were likewise those pictures of rural life which always please in the description; sentiments of a generous and benevolent character; a tone of pathos and melancholy in the recollections of favourite scenes regretted as having fled for ever; similes of high beauty; a versification singularly easy and natural, perfectly musical to the ear without any straining or inversion of language to obtain it; and several of those personal allusions that always add to the interest of a poem, such as the reference to his wanderings—his cares and griefs—and even his poverty. These, amid other admitted excellences, contributed to give it not merely momentary but permanent favour; for in all the fluctuations of taste since, it has never for a moment declined in public esteem.

Two years are commonly said to have been employed in its composition and correction; an error if meant that he was exclusively devoted to the work sufficiently obvious, as in that period we have seen he had written several volumes. Occasional hints, as he seems to admit in the dedication, might have been gleaned in country excursions during a few previous years; but the chief parts were written and the arrangement and revision no doubt effected by snatches, the result more of moments of ease of mind and of such as he deemed favourable circumstances, than of constant application. Even in this way the labour bestowed upon it was very considerable; the aim of a Poet beyond every other description of writer is excellence; and any degree of labour by which this quality which is essential to his being is obtained cannot be considered misapplied. The mode of composition in this as in all his poems, was to write his first thoughts in lines so widely apart as to leave ample room for future emendations. Bishop Percy used to say that so great was his industry or fastidiousness, that these spaces were wholly filled up, so that scarcely an original line of the poem remained.

The fruit of his application was great uniformity of excellence; for we find in it no unfinished passages, none of that obscurity of thought or expression forming one of the greatest and yet most general faults of poetry; no inversion of language; no weak, rugged, or unmusical lines; and no objectionable rhymes, excepting we be permitted to advert to one instance where sketching the village schoolmaster we are told—

“Yet he was kind, or if severe in aught,
The love he bore to learning was in fault.”

But this may have been merely a remnant of that provincialism which occasionally clung to him in manner, accent, and in pronunciation; for in Ireland the word *fault* is frequently sounded without the letter l; a peculiarity which like many other pronunciations in that country, remains popularly unchanged since the reign of Elizabeth. It must be also admitted that he had a great example before him in Pope, who uses a similar rhyme more than once—

“Before his sacred name flies every fault
And each exalted stanza teems with thought.”

* * * * *
“Then say not man’s imperfect, God’s in fault—
Say rather man’s as perfect as he ought.”

And Johnson in his Dictionary selects another couplet from the Essay on Criticism where *fault* and *thought* rhyme, so that he must have considered it unobjectionable although less relished by a modern ear.

An error in natural history was objected to in the line—

“Where crouching tigers, wait their hapless prey,”

as in America, to which it applies, that animal is not found; this was met by an appeal to the usual license of poetry,* and by a quotation from Anson’s Voyage, where in one of the American islands some reference is made to the presence of tigers; a species of which though not so fierce or powerful as that of Asia, is common on that continent. The importance given to this description of criticism, would imply there was little in the detail of the poem with which to find fault.

Against the general positions taken by the Poet, there were stronger objections. Trade it is presumed never can be considered any evil in a trading country; nor is the oppression or depopulation of villages by force or violence of the owners of the soil a probable occurrence in one that boasts to be free. Volunteer patriots and philanthropists who require no spur to exertion but rather an occasional check to their zeal, are too endemic to our soil, and too much on the alert for objects to patronise, to overlook or not to resent such a tyrannical act should it take place. However popular therefore the tale of a grievance commonly is, the writer found few to agree with him; he nevertheless sturdily maintained his opinion, and it may be

* “The poet is not on all occasions to be confined within the precise boundaries of truth. What writer of lively fancy, in describing a morning walk on the banks of Keswick, would not embellish the beauty of the scene by the melody of birds, and thus add the charms of music to all the enchantments of vision? Yet I believe there is not a feathered songster to be found in those delightful vales; probably owing to the terrors inspired by the birds of prey which abound on the mountains that surround them. The same observation will perhaps justify the author of the Deserted Village when he attempts to magnify the terrors of an American wilderness by introducing the *tiger* into the tremendous group, though this animal has never yet been found in the British trans-Atlantic settlements.”—*Dr. Percival’s Works*, 1807. v. ii. p. 170.

conceded that if he found but one village razed or depopulated from whatever cause, this was perhaps sufficient for his purpose.

To swear to the truth of a song is proverbially a work of supererogation; nor is such a voucher perhaps necessary for the political doctrines contained in a poem. It is scarcely necessary therefore to contest the point whether the main argument of the *Deserted Village*, the evils of luxury, be or be not, a fallacy. Poets in all ages, have conspired to make wealth and its usual concomitants a theme for censure; while statesmen who have been fortunate enough to introduce it among the people they govern, consider themselves the greatest public benefactors. Luxury, viewed in the abstract, may be an evil, or at least lead to the introduction of certain moral evils, but it has in fact no abstract existence; it is merely a symptom of general prosperity, and attendant upon a high degree of knowledge, riches, and civilisation; so that the presence of the former, is an indication of the existence of the latter. It is only when luxury is in excess, when the gifts of Providence are abused and made the means of vicious or inordinate appetites and indulgences, that it becomes justly amenable to the censure of the moralist. Restrained within due limits, the stimulus which it gives to human ingenuity must be advantageous to all communities aiming at more than mere animal existence. Nations have been always found to become luxurious as they become rich and intelligent; and it seems therefore idle to regret what is the strongest proof of their advance in the scale of social existence. Of this truth, whatever cause he may have had to change his opinion, none had been more convinced than Goldsmith a few years before.

"Is it not a truth," he inquires in the eleventh letter in the *Citizen of the World*, "that refined countries have more vices, but those not so terrible; barbarous nations few, and they of the most hideous complexion? Perfidy and fraud are the vices of civilised nations; credulity and violence those of the inhabitants of the desert. Does the luxury of the one produce half the evils of the inhumanity of the other? Certainly those philosophers who declaim against luxury have but little understood its benefits; they seem insensible that to luxury we owe not only the greatest part of our knowledge, but even of our virtues.

* * * * *

"Examine the history of any country remarkable for opulence or wisdom, you will find they would never have been wise had they not been first luxurious; you will find poets, philosophers, and even patriots, marching in Luxury's train. * * * In whatsoever light therefore we consider luxury; whether as employing a number of hands naturally too feeble for more laborious employment; as finding a variety of occupation for others who might be totally idle, or as furnishing out new inlets to happiness without encroaching on mutual property; in whatever light we regard it we shall have reason to stand up in its defence, and the sentiment of Confucius still remains unshaken; *that we should enjoy as many of the luxuries of life as are consistent with our own safety, and the prosperity of others; and that*

he who finds out a new pleasure is one of the most useful members of society."

The beauties of the poem offered something for the gratification of every taste; favourite passages found general circulation; but perhaps the most quoted is the celebrated one so much in harmony with the spirit and tendency of the argument—

"Princes and lords may flourish or may fade."

The similes of the hare returning to her haunts, the bird teaching her young to fly, "the tall cliff that lifts its awful form," the description of the village schoolmaster, the apostrophe to poetry, all found advocates. But more especially the picture of the village preacher fixed attention for its excellence, as being at once minute and comprehensive in the characteristics, skilful in their selection, true to nature in general effect, and as forming not only the most finished specimen of a Christian pastor, but one of the most admirable pieces of poetical painting in the whole range of ancient and modern poetry. More than one of his relatives have been put forward as claimants for this character; his father by Mrs. Hodson, his brother by others, and his uncle Contarine by the Rev. Dr. O'Connor. The fact perhaps is that he fixed upon no one individual, but borrowing like all good poets and painters a little from each, drew the character by their combination.

His obligations to predecessors were, as in the instance of the Traveller, few, or rather it would be difficult to say that he has borrowed from any. In the character of the Village Preacher there are the lines—

"Truth from his lips prevail'd with double sway,
And fools who came to scoff remain'd to pray:"

which bear some resemblance in expression though not in thought, to a passage in the *Britannia Rediviva* of Dryden—

"Our vows are heard betimes, and Heaven takes care,
To grant before we can conclude the prayer;
Preventing angels met it half the way,
And sent us back to praise who came to pray."

The admired simile which concludes the description of the same character, it is supposed by high classical authority, to be taken from a Roman poet. "But as Claudian has come in my way," says the Rev. Gilbert Wakefield in his *Memoirs*, "and the subject turns on the obligations of the moderns to the ancients, I will step out of the road to discover the origin of perhaps the sublimest simile that English poetry can boast.—

'As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.'

————— ‘*Ut altus Olympi
Vertex, qui spatio ventos hiemesque relinquit,
Perpetuum nullâ temeratus nube serenum,
Celsior exsurgit pluviis, auditque ruentes
Sub pedibus nimbos, et rauca tonitrua calcat;
Sic patiens animus per tanta negotia liber
Emergit, similisque sui : justique tenorem
Flectere non odium cogit, non gratia suadet.*

CLAUD. *de Mall. Theod. Cons.* 206.’ ”

He adds another quotation from Statius tending as he also thinks to resemblance—

“*Stat sublimis apex, ventosque imbresque serenus
Despicit.*”

Theb. ii. 35.

Scholars like Mr. Wakefield, strongly imbued with classical partialities, too frequently seem willing to take from the merit due to modern writers in order to add to the already abundant store of the ancients. To such, a preference for the companions of their youth and the favourites of their riper years, is perhaps unavoidable; much of their happiness is made up by dwelling on their superiority, and the haze of antiquity serves to magnify deserts which no reader of taste will deny, though some may believe they have no more than a due share of admiration. With the more ardent lovers of classical authors we are perhaps more than with others, disposed to contest a point of criticism, from the knowledge that the course of their studies has a tendency to bias the judgment. Admitting some general resemblance in the simile, it may be observed that no English poet of equal education has so few obligations to the ancients as Goldsmith; he treats of no subject in common with them, has no reference to their gods, heroes, opinions, or manners, rarely descends to a translation or one at least such as he thought worth preserving, and in all his poems scarcely a mythological allusion so much hackneyed by other writers, occurs. His topics, descriptions, and incidents are modern, domestic, and almost wholly applicable to English life, manners, and character. Had he borrowed in this instance, he would probably have taken more by extending the imitation, as it offers a fine field for poetical description. Indeed in the two passages there are distinctive differences which taking a liberal view of such things seem to point to a different origin, or that the respective writers wrote each from original impressions. The lines of Goldsmith are few and general, those of Claudian detailed and specific; in the former we find no reference to the winds of winter, to falling rains, to treading under foot, black, threatening clouds and the hoarse thunder; while the more picturesque points of the English poet, the “awful form,” “the swelling from the vale,” and “the eternal sunshine settling on its head,” are wanting in the Roman writer.

But if a source other than the imagination of the poet be sought, we may find it in another quarter; he was then employed in writing the first volume of *Animated Nature*, in which Ulloa, the traveller in South America who has furnished him with many other facts, is

expressly quoted as affording the substance of the following striking description, which however forms only part of further details on the same subject. "On those places next the highest summits, vegetation is scarcely carried on; here and there a few plants of the most hardy kind appear. The air is intolerably cold; either continually refrigerated with frosts, or disturbed with tempests. All the ground here wears an eternal covering of ice and snows that seems constantly accumulating. Upon emerging from this war of the elements, he ascends into a purer and serener region, where vegetation entirely ceases; where the precipices, composed entirely of rocks, arise perpendicularly above him; while he views beneath him all the combat of the elements; clouds at his feet; and thunders darting upward from their bosoms below. A thousand meteors, which are never seen on the plain, present themselves. Circular rainbows; mock suns; the shadow of the mountain projected upon the body of the air; and the traveller's own image, reflected as in a looking-glass, upon the opposite cloud. Such are, in general, the wonders that present themselves to a traveller in his journey either over the Alps or the Andes."*

A phrase used in the passage—

"In all my wanderings round this world of care,
In all my griefs, and God has given my share,"

is the same as one of Collins in his second Eclogue—

"Ye mute companions of my toils, that bear
In all my griefs, a more than equal share."

A strange origin has been found by an anonymous writer for the thought in the celebrated passage, "Princes and lords may flourish or may fade," &c., in an old French poet, De Caux, who in one of his poems on an hour glass comparing the world to it, says—

"C'est un verre qui luit,
Qu'un souffle peut détruire, et qu'un souffle a produit

But if we are disposed to hunt for imitations in passages which after all have obviously sprung from the subject and not, as minute criticism would have us believe, forced into it, an origin might have been discovered nearer home. In an indifferent poem published in 1769, called the *Middlesex Freeholder*, we receive the novel information that

"Kings may make *lords*, but cannot make a *man*."

And several months after the publication of the *Deserted Village*, a naval promotion having taken place which gave little satisfaction to such officers as were not included, it was said by a writer in one of

* *Animated Nature*, vol. i. p. 145.

the daily journals, who by the same rule might be said to have borrowed the hint from Goldsmith that

“The king might make admirals, but could not make seamen.”

Yet were this kind of criticism permitted to pass current in literature, scarcely any writer could hope to have credit for originality.

As it is ever a source of interest to trace the origin of poetical paintings,—of those objects or hints often trifling in themselves, which having at some time fallen under the eye of Genius, are treasured up for future use, and become by her creative powers objects of general attention, the question has been often asked in England, and the inquiry shows the impression made by the poet, whether Auburn is merely a poetical creation, or really existed and experienced the fate he describes. The name appears to have been chosen merely as pretty and poetical, derived perhaps from a village so named in Wiltshire; two others take their names from the poem; one Auburn is in America, and the other forms the residence of Mr. Hogan, nearly opposite Lissoy, the abode of Goldsmith's father, and is of comparatively recent erection. That village is no doubt the spot which furnished the chief scenery of the poem, an opinion which was early formed as already stated in a former page of this work. His sisters Mrs. Hodson and Mrs. Johnson traced many of their brother's stories, sketches and characters, to his own adventures, or to places and persons, in the neighbourhood. Auburn was at once pronounced by these ladies to be Lissoy, and their father the village preacher; and in this belief all the residents in the vicinity have concurred.

“This place,” (Lissoy,) says Dr. Streat who having been curate of Kilkenny West enjoyed the same amount of salary as Henry Goldsmith forty pounds a year, “is certainly the Auburn of the Poet. The inhabitants there at that time, their characters and the situation of the country, then and now, prove this;” and he enters into details which the writer has verified by personal observation.

“With respect to Auburn,” writes the Rev. Mr. Handcock* in letters now before the writer dated Athlone, October 30th and December 1st, 1790, addressed to the late Joseph Cooper Walker, Esq., of Dublin, “there is a place within six miles of this town where Oliver Goldsmith's father lived many years ‘The Village Preacher,’ where Oliver himself was born, and passed his youth—and where I am assured he took the history, and I know he took the scenery, of his Deserted Village. All this a nephew of Goldsmith and two of his sisters now living here, assure me he has acknowledged to them.” Again he says, (December 1st of the same year.)

“I wished to give you the fullest information, and this could not be done at the fire-side. I did not indeed complete my own informa-

* This gentleman was a native of Athlone, and after these letters were written, for some years managed the property of Lissoy for Mr. Henry Goldsmith, son of the clergyman, an officer in the army, and nephew of the Poet. For the perusal of the letters the writer is obliged to Joseph Cooper Walker, Esq., of Dublin.

tion of Goldsmith's history until this day, when in a conversation of three hours with his sister, I was confirmed in what before I could not fully persuade myself of, namely, that Lissoy was the scene of his Deserted Village.

"In order to be accurate in the description you require of the place, I rode there immediately on receipt of your letter; it is a snug farm-house in view of the high road, to which a straight avenue leads with double rows of ash trees,* six miles N. E. of this town. The farm is still held under the Naper family by a nephew of Goldsmith at present in America. In the front view of the house is the 'decent church' of Kilkenny West, that literally 'tops the neighbouring hill;' and in a circuit of not more than half a mile diameter around the house, are 'the never failing brook,' 'the busy mill,' 'the hawthorn bush with seats beneath the shade,' 'the brook with mantling cresses spread,' 'the straggling fence that skirts the way, with blossomed furze unprofitably gay,' 'the thorn that lifts its head on high, where once the sign-post caught the passing eye,' 'the house where nut brown draughts inspired,' in short every striking object in the picture. There are besides many ruined houses in the neighbourhood, bespeaking a better state of population than at present.

"The history of the place is, that at the return of the late General Naper from Germany, the leases of his estate which had been parcelled into small farms being then expired, he dislodged in general the old tenantry, in order to furnish an extensive demesne to his house which is not far distant.

"In the house at Lissoy, lived Goldsmith's father, at first curate to an uncle named Green and 'passing rich on forty pounds a year.' After the death of the incumbent he obtained the living. This gentleman and his wife were the genuine Dr. and Mrs. Primrose. Though a man of learning, there are many laughable instances of his simplicity and ignorance of mankind recorded in the neighbourhood to this day. Here Goldsmith was instructed in the first stage of his learning."

So far the identity of Auburn and Lissoy is considered certain by such as are best acquainted with the neighbourhood. The incident alluded to by Mr. Hancock and said to form the groundwork of the poem has been adverted to in a preceding chapter, but is thus more specifically told.

Lieut. Gen. Robert Naper, so spelt in the law documents of the time though now written Napier, who is represented to have returned from Vigo in Spain with a large fortune, purchased, as has been stated, the adjoining lands. In erecting a residence and forming a demesne around it, the habitations of some as is alleged, respectable tenants, and several of the peasantry stood in the way, and being unwilling to remove for his convenience, were at length after much resistance, all excepting the Goldsmith family, ejected for non-payment of rent. Their houses were pulled down and the park enlarged

* These, as stated in a previous page, no longer exist, having been cut down by the purchaser of the property from the Goldsmith family.

to a circumference of nine miles; but so great was the indignation of the people at the proceeding, that on the general's death, which occurred soon afterward, they assembled in a tumultuous manner, assailed the house, destroyed much of the property in and around it, and among other things the plantations, to the value of 5000*l*.

Such is the story; but stories of this description in Ireland after the lapse of a few years must be taken with certain allowances for heat and misrepresentation; and after some trouble taken in the inquiry, we may be induced to believe that if not wholly untrue it is highly exaggerated. The original estate on reference to papers connected with its purchase, was six hundred acres; to this on the death of the general who seems to have died before the contract was finished, was added nearly six hundred more, and had the whole been converted into demesne which from other documents we know was not the case, it could not have embraced any thing like a circumference of nine miles. The house moreover is of very moderate size, not at all of dimensions requiring such an extent of park; the high road likewise from Athlone to Ballymahon, a few smaller cross roads, the house of Goldsmith's father which could not be disturbed, the mill to which he alludes in the poem, and a variety of other objects if not natural obstacles, stand much less than a mile from the house so said to be built or begun by general Naper, and would necessarily interfere with his design. Neither, had he been tyrannically disposed, was the Goldsmith family at his mercy; their tenure by the terms of the lease as already stated, was "for ever" on the fulfilment of the moderate conditions therein stated; and the original possessor was Mr. Newstead, not General Naper.

The truth probably was that the general in entering upon his new purchase in a rude and disturbed country, found the occupiers of the soil disposed, as is too commonly the case in Ireland, to consider themselves its freeholders, and scarcely liable on any plea or even provocation, to be disturbed. That he could procure no rent the story admits; being necessarily driven to process of law to compel payment, the act was revenged by those barbarous outrages which are as common on such occasions at the present day as at remote periods. When once removed, their habitations, which are commonly of the rudest description, may have been razed to prevent a repetition of such scenes.

So far it is possible the offence of the proprietor extended; but the wanton destruction of a thriving or pretty village in a country where such are carefully encouraged by all proprietors of lands, is wholly improbable. Popular opinion however always inclines to the weaker side; and the circumstances if true only in the smallest degree, were calculated to make a strong impression upon a mind like that of Goldsmith, generous in its impulses, but not always discriminating in its judgments. These being retained and revolved with all the tenacity of early impressions, would readily acquire that tone of exaggeration, capable of transforming for the purposes of poetry, a group of mud cabins into a beautiful village; and perhaps their tur-

bulent and vindictive occupants, into injured, and innocent, and expatriated peasants. Any similar story heard by him in England would recall the razed village of his native land; and without allusion to Ireland, which he might think likely to diminish its interest in the eye of an English reader, his sketch would partake, as we really find it, of the characteristics of both countries.

The details of the poem sufficiently show that he had each occasionally in view; the picture is neither wholly from imagination, nor wholly from reality; from any one place, or from any one division of the kingdom; but from the remembrance or observation of many circumstances belonging to either island, which with the skill of a poet are worked up into a perfect whole. Thus the flourishing state of trade, the influx of wealth and luxury, the song of the nightingale, and many other incidental details, hold good only of England. On the other hand, the stream of emigration which has for a century largely and steadily flowed toward America, and much of the local scenery and objects belong to Ireland.

The allusions bearing upon Lissoy are numerous; the following are supposed to apply to the Sundays or numerous holidays, usually kept in Roman Catholic countries.

“How often have I blessed the coming day
When toil remitting lent its turn to play.”

To the succeeding are traced the origin of the poem—

———“The man of wealth and pride,
Takes up the space that many poor supplied,
Space for his lake, his park’s extended bounds,
Space for his horses, equipage and hounds.”

The general character of the adjoining country, particularly in the rear of the house, being a plain, Auburn is appropriately characterized “loveliest village of the plain.” As the scene of enjoyment in early life, and of boyish delights, he with equal truth and affection calls them—

“Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
Seats of my youth when every sport could please,
How often have I loitered o’er thy green!”

And again—

“How often have I paused on every charm!”

Personal allusions such as these may be admissible in poetry not strictly meant to be accurately descriptive, yet taken with the context, their application to the feelings and circumstances of the writer is perfectly compatible with the fact.

“The never-failing brook, the busy mill,”

are found in a hollow, the road to which lies at the end of the village in a turning to the left as we proceed from his paternal resi-

dence; the stream which moves it is small, and the mill of rude construction, and of the overshot kind, but he may have had also in view that of Ballymahon, which existed at that period above the bridge of that town, and where afterwards he was known to spend many hours.

“The decent church that tops the neighbouring hill,”

was that in which his father officiated, crowning a height of gentle elevation in front of their residence, and though distant about a mile, from its conspicuous situation constantly in their eye.

Such an object was not likely to escape his recollection. The term *decent* is that perhaps which describes it most exactly; being clean and very homely without pretension to any other quality. Between it and the house, lies a valley occupied by a sheet of water, alluded to probably in the line—

“The noisy geese that gabbled o’er the pool.”

Another natural object—

“The hawthorn bush with seats beneath the shade,
For talking age, and whispering lovers made,”

was larger than ordinary trees of that description, with surrounding seats as here represented; it rose with a double trunk, shaded a considerable portion of ground opposite the ale-house, and from being at the confluence of two roads, presented sufficient space for the evening assemblages of the villagers, described as having

“Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree.”

The selection of a “hawthorn bush,” so rarely of sufficient dimensions to perform the office here assigned when so many nobler tenants of the forest affording ampler shade and more majesty of description for his verse were at poetical command to use on the occasion, is considered another proof of the identity of the spot from which the picture was drawn. The celebrity of this tree has been fatal to it. The material objects immortalized by poets are too frequently sacrificed to the admiration they excite, as if spoliation were the truest test of devotion in the eyes of admirers; and poetry thus seems like the unnatural mother of mythology, content to prey upon her own offspring. Every traveller hither for a period of forty years, carried away a portion of the tree as a relic either of the poem or of his pilgrimage; when the branches had been destroyed, the trunks were attacked; and when these disappeared, even the roots were partially dug up, so that in 1820, scarcely a vestige remained either above or below ground, notwithstanding a resident gentleman by building round it endeavoured to prevent its utter extermination. At the period of the writer’s visit (1830) a very tender shoot had again forced its way to the surface, which he in imitation of so many other inconsiderate idlers felt disposed to seize upon as a memorial of his visit;

but if permitted to remain, though this is unlikely, may renew the honours paid to its predecessor.

Opposite the remains of the hawthorn stands the ale-house—

——— “where nut brown draughts inspired,
Where gray-beard mirth and smiling toil retired,”

still appropriated to its original use, chiefly by the care of Mr. Hogan, who repaired or rebuilt it after being long in a state of decay. By the same hand it was supplied with the sign of the “Three Jolly Pigeons,” with new copies of the “twelve good rules,” and the “royal game of goose,” not omitting even the—

——— “broken tea-cups wisely kept for show
Ranged o’er the chimney glistened in a row,”—

which for better security in the frail tenure of an Irish publican, or the doubtful decorum of his guests, were embedded in the mortar. Most of these have again disappeared, sacrifices to the love of relics, and sold no doubt to admiring visitors as the originals referred to in the poem; even the sign is no longer to be seen, removed either by cupidity or the ravages of time.

The allusions to America, as the destined home of voluntary exiles, who

——— “took a long farewell and wished in vain,
For seats like these beyond the western main,”

are in perfect keeping with truth, the late celebrated John Wesley having remarked the large efflux of persons thither from Ireland as far back as the year 1770, though it prevailed at a much earlier period. Indeed whenever by the alleged cupidity of landlords, the rivalry of other tenants, or their own imprudence, the lower class of Irish become unsettled, they seldom refix permanently in another part of their own country, or even in England or Scotland, but commonly seek a distant, and as they are led to believe, a more advantageous settlement in the New World.

The pathetic lines—

——— “Yon widow’d solitary thing
That feebly bends beside the plashy spring;
She, wretched matron, forced in age, for bread,
To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread,”

are supposed to apply to a female named Catherine Geraghty whom the Poet had known in earlier and better days, and who was well remembered by some of the inhabitants when Dr. Strean served the curacy of the parish. The brook and ditches near the spot where her cabin stood, still furnish cresses, and several of her descendants reside in the neighbourhood.

To his own instructor, Thomas Byrne, is supposed to belong the description of a personage so important to youth.

"There in his noisy mansion, skill'd to rule,
The village master taught his little school."

But the portrait though good as a general sketch, wants that individuality which from the actual peculiarities of the person in question, might have been given it; one probable characteristic however is retained—

"While words of learned length, and thundering sound,
Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around."

The school-house is still shown; here there may be some straining of fact as to identity, for no place built expressly for such purpose having existed at that time, the common cottages which are constructed loosely of mud and stone would have crumbled long ere this, few of them without great care attaining the age of a century.

No lines in the poem point more strongly to the abode of his youth, than,

"Along thy glades a solitary guest,
The hollow-sounding bittern guards its nest."

In the immediate vicinity of the village and in more than one direction, is found a considerable portion of water; a river likewise, with several small lakes, pools, and marsh lands, lie around Ballymahon, to which is now added the course of the Grand Canal from Dublin; to several of these, water-fowl continue to resort and among others the bird which he has thought proper to notice in the foregoing lines. In the opening of the sixth volume of *Animated Nature*, it is thus poetically adverted to, with the effects of its call upon the minds of the villagers.

"Those who have walked in an evening by the sedgy sides of unfrequented rivers, must remember a variety of notes from different water-fowl: the loud scream of the wild goose, the croaking of the mallard, the whining of the lapwing, and the tremulous neighing of the jacksnipe. But of all these sounds, there is none so dismally hollow as the booming of the bittern. It is impossible for words to give those who have not heard this evening call an adequate idea of its solemnity. It is like an interrupted bellowing of a bull, but hollower and louder, and is heard at a mile's distance as if issuing from some formidable being that resided at the bottom of the waters.

* * * * *

*I remember in the place where I was a boy with what terror this bird's note affected the whole village; they considered it as the pre-sage of some sad event; and generally found or made one to succeed it. I do not speak ludicrously; but if any person in the neighbourhood died, they supposed it could not be otherwise, for the night-raven had foretold it; but if nobody happened to die, the death of a cow or sheep gave completion to the prophecy."**

The primitive state of manners implied by the description of the village clergyman's fire-side, where the "long remembered beggar," "the ruin'd spendthrift," and "the broken soldier" figure as guests, is exclusively Irish. Beggars are a privileged class in that country, particularly in rural districts, where the want of poor laws to provide for the destitute, the aged, and the infirm, imparts a prescriptive claim amounting nearly to a right, to the compassion of the poorer and middling classes of people, upon whom the burden of maintaining them almost exclusively falls. The epithet "long remembered" is thus strictly correct; for the same persons are seen for a series of years to traverse the same tract of country at certain intervals, intrude into every house which is not defended by the usual outworks of wealth, a gate and a porter's lodge, exact their portion of the food of the family, and even find an occasional resting-place for the night, or from severe weather, in the chimney-corner of respectable farmers.

French versions of this poem have appeared both in prose and verse. Among the latter was a paraphrase by the Chevalier Rudlidge in two cantos, octavo, 1772, called *Le Retour du Philosophe, ou La Village Abandonné*, for which Goldsmith returned the writer his thanks; an imitation called *Le Village Détruit* by M. Léonard, whose name has been already mentioned as an imitator of the Hermit; another by M. Monvels; a complete translation, though of indifferent execution, by a writer with the initials M. P. A. L. in 1805; but of these the affecting muse of M. Léonard as the French critics say, for the writer has not met with it, gives the truest idea of the English poem. The collection of Madame de la Borde called *Divers Poemes imités de l'Anglais*, 1785, contains translations in prose of the Deserted Village and the Traveller. The character of the Village Schoolmaster has been closely imitated by De Lille in *L'Homme des Champs*.

Several journals of the day, it has been observed, were made the vehicles of praise or dispraise of the poem. In one of these* which was then made a frequent medium for the communication of opinions upon polite literature, there are no less than seventeen letters within a few months connected with this seemingly fertile subject; of which a specimen of the complimentary description, may be given.

"To Dr. Goldsmith."

ON READING HIS POEM OF THE DESERTED VILLAGE.

"Goldsmith, the laurel does to thee belong,
All ears delighted listen to thy song;
So strongly dost thou paint the flowery plain,
The leafy grove, the golden-tinctured grain;
The pleasing sports that round the village stray,
The harmony that breaks from every spray;
The comprehensive thought, the tuneful line,
The perdurable plan, the just design;

* St. James's Chronicle; with which many popular writers of the day were connected, either as proprietors or contributors.

These high enrol thee in poetic fame,
 And crown with plaudits due thy peerless name;
 Go on, sweet bard, thy lays continue still,
 While the groves echo to thy magic quill;
 O may'st thou still in melting notes prolong,
 The matchless pleasures of melodious song.

Another said to be written by a Mr. Fowler a barrister, and frequent contributor to the newspapers, may suffice to give the reader an idea rather of the warmth of his admiration than the excellence of his lines.

"Ascend again the Pegasean hill,
 Th' abstracted ear with rapturous music fill;
 So Vice shall feel the terrors of thy hand,
 And Virtue grace once more this abject land.*

"P. F."

One of the topics particularly adverted to by readers and critics, was the intimation dropped by the Poet, of forsaking the pursuit of an art which is plainly stated to have proved of an unprofitable kind. A general interest was expressed on this occasion by all the admirers of his poetical talents; the reviews joined the newspapers in their regrets; and a variety of petitions were thrown out to prevail upon him not to carry his threat into execution. "We hope," was the general strain of supplication, "for the honour of the art and the pleasure of the public, Dr. Goldsmith will retract his farewell to poetry, and give us other opportunities of doing justice to his merit."†

Two letters on this subject, one partly in verse, the other in prose, indicate that some interest was really felt in his threatened desertion; the first, originally supposed from the initials affixed and perhaps from the verses being on a par with such as he usually wrote, to be written by Boswell though dated from Oxford; the second, though signed with an apparently real name, was said by his constant assailant Kenrick to be written by Goldsmith himself in order to praise his own production; but neither statement appears to be true. Little or nothing in his praise can be traced to the pen of Boswell; and Goldsmith had quitted England on an excursion to France before the publication of the second letter. From the tone of the latter however, and the minuteness of reply to the chief strictures passed on the poem, particularly in the Critical Review, it may have come from some zealous friend who knew and spoke the sentiments of the author, but most certainly it is not his own. The remonstrance in verse is subjoined;‡ that in prose as a specimen of the opinions and

* St. James's Chronicle, July 31.—Aug. 2. 1770.

† Monthly Review, June 1770.

‡ *To the Printer of the St. James's Chronicle.*

"Dr. Goldsmith in his *Deserted Village* has these excellent but alarming lines toward the end of it, addressed to Poetry—

criticism of the day being too long for insertion here, will be found in a future volume annexed to the poem.

Among other evidences of the popularity of the poem were imitations of the title and subject. Thus, "The Village Oppressed; a Poem—Dedicated to Dr. Goldsmith," and "The Frequented Village; a Poem—Dedicated to Dr. Goldsmith," soon appeared, both authors proud of his acquaintance, and proud likewise to tell the world of the honour they enjoyed. It may be doubted whether he was equally proud of his disciples, neither of whom were proficient in the art of poetry, as will be obvious from the complimentary and concluding part of the latter production, the better of the two, "by a Gentleman of the Middle Temple," who was so impressed by the danger of surreptitious copies of his work being put into circulation, that he "begs to sign the initials of his name 'B. K.' in each copy."

"Accept dear Goldsmith, these ingenuous lines,
Whose generous breast no thought but truth confines;
Whose page instructive, as harmonious, found,
A bright example sheds its light around.

'Dear charming nymph, neglected and decry'd,
My shame in crowds, my solitary pride,
Thou source of all my bliss and all my woe,
That found'st me poor at first and keep'st me so,
Thou guide, by which the nobler arts excel,
Thou nurse of every virtue, fare thee well!'

"Apollo and the Muses forbid! What! shall the author of the Traveller and the Deserted Village, poems which not only do honour to the nation, but are the only living proofs that true poetry is not dead among us; shall he, I say, this author, living in the richest nation in Europe and the subject of a young and generous King who loves, cherishes, and understands the fine arts, be obliged to drudge for booksellers, and write, because he must write, lives of poets much inferior to himself, Roman History, Natural History, or any history, and be forced to curb his imagination lest it should run him into distresses?

'Quatenus heu nefas.'

"I could not stop the overflowing of my mind on this occasion in the following lines—

UPON DR. GOLDSMITH TAKING HIS FAREWELL OF POETRY IN HIS DESERTED VILLAGE.

'Mason was mute, and Gray but touch'd the lyre,
For faction chills, not fans, poetic fire;
Where Shakspeare's genius blazed and Milton's glow'd,
Discord has fix'd her dark and drear abode,
Spreads gloom around, and now no tuneful bird,
Except the lonely Nightingale, is heard;
He sadly sweet, his wo-fraught bosom heaved,
And o'er deserted Auburn hung and grieved.
'Pathetic warbler of the pensive plain,
Cast forth this demon with thy magic strain;
O soothe our troubled minds, renew thy song,
And as alone thou charm'st us, charm us long.
From royal George the royal means shall spring,
To give thee strength to fly and power to sing;
So shall his reign this long wish'd truth declare,
That kings can feel and Genius smile at care.'

"Oxford, July 12th.

J. B."

To thee unfledged my tender muse would soar,
 Secured of thine what praises wish I more ?
 Whose pensive ruins, sadly colour'd, tell,
 That once a people happily did dwell,
 Whose desert waste and unfrequented spot,
 Proclaim a village lost, forlorn, forgot."

The four concluding lines of the poem were supplied by Dr. Johnson, who in looking it over while preparing for the press, conceived they furnished a more appropriate termination—

"That trade's proud empire hastes to swift decay,
 As ocean sweeps the labour'd mole away :
 While self-dependent power can time defy,
 As rocks resist the billows and the sky."

See Boswell, vol. ii. p. 309.

CHAPTER XX.

Requested to write in support of the ministry.—Newspaper wit.—Life of Parnell. Excursion to Paris.—Adridgment of Roman History.—Life of Bolingbroke.—Opinion of Rowley's Poems.—Haunch of Venison.—Dr. Hiffernan.

THE attention drawn to his farewell to Poetry appeared to answer the object for which it was probably written; that of hinting the impracticability of pursuing an art in which he gave so much pleasure, without having other pecuniary means than his literary labours furnished, of acquiring the necessary leisure for that purpose; and a public provision was thought of by his friends.

An impression of being neglected, there is no doubt, had for some time taken root in his mind; he became irritable from the constant drudgery of writing; and from the same cause experienced occasional attacks of a very painful complaint, which were usually succeeded by fits of despondency, and these held up to an exciting imagination the probability of being deprived by advancing infirmity of the power of contributing to his own support. A considerable share of public favour and applause added something perhaps to the opinion of his own deserts. Next to Johnson, he occupied the largest share of public attention in popular literature; on topics of criticism and polite letters his name frequently occurs in the periodical works of the day in conjunction with the latter, and appeals were made conjointly to their judgment; his works had acquired the highest reputation; and the state of his pecuniary circumstances when known, induced the hope of sharing in the bounty that had pensioned Johnson, Sheridan, and Shebbeare; and found means if not of pensioning, at least of being liberal to Murphy, Kelly, and others.

Allusions to his poverty occur in many parts of his writings and he was equally unreserved in conversation. To Poetry he says emphatically

“That found’st me *poor* at first and keep’st me so.

Writing to Mr. Bennet Langton in 1771, in speaking of his labours in Natural History we have the admission—“God knows I am tired of this kind of finishing, which is but bungling work; and that not so much my fault as the fault of my scurvy circumstances.” In the preface to that history in allusion to the expense as well as the labour it cost him, we are told, “I have taxed my scanty circumstances in procuring books, which are on this subject, of all others the most expensive.” To the Earl of Lisburn, who once addressed him at a dinner at the Royal Academy with a complimentary notice of his poetical talents and an inquiry whether the world was to be favoured by a new production of his genius, he jocularly replied, “My Lord, I cannot afford to court the draggle-tail Muses; they will let me starve: but by pursuing plain prose, I can make shift to eat, and drink, and wear good clothes.”

No other notice of the hints thus dropped was taken by the dispensers of national bounty, than an attempt made some months afterwards to engage him through the means of one of their most active agents in support of the ministry, which was then hard-pressed by the opposition in parliament, and by Junius, Wilkes, and a variety of other political writers out of it; so that his reward or expected reward was thus to be made dependent not on his literary, but on his political services.

This proposal he had the courage to decline. The fact of its having been made seems to be placed beyond doubt by the bearer of it. The Rev. Dr. Scott, well known as a warm political partisan of the day, and a constant writer in the newspapers under a variety of signatures particularly Anti-Sejanus, Panurge, and others,* having communicated the fact to living witnesses.† To one of these, Mr. Basil Montagu, to whom the public is indebted for matters of much more importance, the writer is obliged for the anecdote. It exhibits the very different tone of feeling between the Poet though poor, and the reverend and prosperous politician, the studious scholar, and the veteran man of the world; and the former perhaps deserves the more credit for his independence when we consider that in complying with the request, he would have been advancing not only his worldly interests, but supporting his avowed political principles, which were nearly similar to those of Dr. Johnson.

“A few months,” writes Mr. Montagu, “before the death of Dr. Scott, author of Anti-Sejanus and other political tracts in support of

* In the Public Advertiser, April 6th, 1770, there is a coarse and abusive squib, addressed “To the Rev. Anti-Sejanus, alias the Rev. Mr. Slyboots, alias the Rev. Mr. * * * Chaplain to the pious Jemmy Twitcher.” (Lord Sandwich, who was known by this name,) This was Dr. Scott.

† Since this was written Sir George Tuthill has died.

Lord North's administration, I happened to dine with him in company with my friend Sir George Tuthill, who was the Doctor's physician. After dinner Dr. Scott mentioned, as matter of astonishment and a proof of the folly of men who are according to common opinion ignorant of the world, that *he* was once sent with a *carte blanche* from the ministry to Oliver Goldsmith to induce him to write in favour of the administration. "I found him," said the Doctor, "in a miserable set of chambers in the Temple; I told him my authority; I told him that I was empowered to pay most liberally for his exertions, and, would you believe it! he was so absurd as to say—'*I can earn as much as will supply my wants without writing for any party; the assistance therefore you offer is unnecessary to me,*' and so I left him," added Dr. Scott, "in his garret."

The purport of this interview soon came to the knowledge of his friends by whom it was probably mentioned in conversation to others; for threats were occasionally held forth to him in the newspapers if he should become a retainer of the ministry. Among the more authoritative exhortations thus published, and which is said to have been sent him privately, is the following; it seems to proceed from one to whom his hope of receiving a portion of that royal bounty extended to so many others, his inferiors in literary merit, was evidently not unknown. But the persuasive it contained to despise extraneous assistance, and to depend solely on his own resources for support, as if literature was either an easy or a lucrative profession, or one such as required no other encouragement than praise, for little more than praise could be earned by poetry to which this writer points, is one of those gratuitous pieces of advice, which those who commonly give, would deem it exceedingly inconsiderate or a proof of great self-denial in themselves to follow.

"A friend to Dr Goldsmith's great merit as a writer, and worth as a man, hopes he will avail himself of the candid and generous treatment he meets with from the public; their favour he will at all times find to be the best of pensions; and if the Doctor thinks rightly, he will pay a strict regard to his reputation, by avoiding the stigma which literary men too often fix upon themselves, that of betraying the interests of their country for base and scandalous pay.

"There is no need to point out by name the spaniels to power; they are sufficiently known and despised; but the tool of a minister, the drudge of a bookseller, or the compiler of temporising histories are characters beneath Dr. Goldsmith's genius and principles to stoop to. He has luckily too no share in a patent to make him mean or avaricious, nor would he as it is believed, desert the cause of science to become the sparrow and bashaw of a declining theatre. There is a nobler field before the Doctor; let him till it; and may that public who are to reap the fruits of that culture, continue to reward him!"

Akin to the disinterestedness which induced him to refuse the proposal from the ministry, the following story is told. Having received for the Deserted Village a note for one hundred guineas, he was

told by a friend whom he met when returning from the bookseller, that it was a large sum for a short performance; and seeming to be of the same opinion by the remark "that it was more perhaps than the honest man could afford," he returned and delivered it up.

Whether true or not, the anecdote sufficiently conveys the general opinion formed of his probity and generosity; but its authenticity is at least doubtful. A bookseller scarcely requires to be instructed by a stranger about the amount to be given for a poem written by a popular writer, the merit of which was obvious to any critical eye; and Goldsmith was commonly too much in want of money to relinquish, without further and convincing reasons what must have been voluntarily given as the reward of his labours. Had the sale been such as to prove a loss to the purchaser, he would no doubt have reimbursed him in another way, but of the value of the time and labour expended upon the work, the severe and repeated revisions it had undergone, producing so near an approach to perfection as to occasion little or no alteration in successive editions, he could not be ignorant. Poems are not to be judged as the supposed remark of this friend would imply, by their length, but by their excellence; the former is indeed sometimes a vulgar criterion of merit, and it might perhaps escape from one of the persons whom his good nature not their own merits or intelligence, admitted to occasional intimacy. The whole sum received for this poem is supposed not to have been more than one hundred guineas.*

The names of Johnson and Goldsmith were so commonly united, that when one became the sport of newspaper wit, the other rarely escaped.† The former was callous to any thing of this description; but the Irish poet being known to be sensitive, many of the inferior writers, from envy or love of mischief, took delight in teasing him by their jests and ridicule.

On one of these occasions Johnson and he were represented as the Pedant and his flatterer in *Love's Labour Lost*. Goldsmith, whose dignity was offended by the imputation, came to his friend complaining of their insolence and vowing vengeance against the printer,

* The precise sum received for it appears not to have been known among what is called the *trade*; for Cadell who was connected with Goldsmith in some literary transactions did not know the amount. In Hannah More's correspondence it appears that he offered her the same sum for *Sir Eldred of the Bower* as was received for the *Deserted Village*, if she could find it out;—a striking proof of the very different value of poetry in the literary market and in Parnassus; for no one of critical discrimination, least of all the ingenious authoress, would have ventured to compare them in the scale of merit.

† Johnson was frequently the subject of a squib, in allusion either to his personal peculiarities, his politics, or his pension. In one he is announced (ironically of course) to appear in the character of *Sir Charles Easy*, and Goldsmith in that of *Common Sense*. In another he is represented, in allusion to the pension, as Hercules slaying the Hesperian Dragon, and receiving his *reward*. Again in a squib against the ministry where each is recommended to fill a place at variance with their supposed characters, he finds a place as *Governor of Falkland Islands*. In a mock will of Wilkes, among other satirical bequests there is,—“To my dear wife, my love;—to Mrs. Catharine M'Auley, my breeches;” “to Dr. Samuel Johnson, my politeness.” These are only a few out of a great number.

till Johnson, impatient of the subject, cried out at last, "Why, what wouldest thou have, dear Doctor? Who the plague is hurt with all this nonsense? and how is a man the worse I wonder in his health, purse, or character for being called *Holofernes*?" "I do not know," replied the Poet with some readiness, "how you may relish being called *Holofernes*, but I do not like at least to play *Goodman Dull*."

Mrs. Piozzi, who relates the anecdote, gives no reference to the article that produced it, which however the writer has discovered.* The wit is neither very new nor sparkling. The author of it through the convenient medium of a dream, attends a fancied auction, where a bookseller acting as auctioneer, is supposed to put up the literati of the day to sale, and the literary friends are thus described, beginning with Johnson.

Auctioneer. "This is the Leviathan of Literature—the Colossus Doctor—and his friend, the head of the press; a technical pair, fit to fill up any lady's library. The first was secretary to Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia, but turning out both an *Idler* and a *Rambler* and giving many *False Alarms* to the city, by which he frightened into fits the Queen Irene, he was immediately ordered to be sold by public auction.

"His companion was thought a *Good-natured Man* till he injured a *Vicar of Wakefield* by deluding the poor priest with a false *Prospect of Society*; since which he has crawled among the ruins of a *Deserted Village*, and employed his time in castrating the *Roman History*. These are the literary Castor and Pollux; the benevolent, celebrated, convivial associates; the incomprehensible *Holofernes* and the impenetrable *Goodman Dull*. Gentlemen say something for this concatenated couple.—Six shillings—Zounds—that the originals should not fetch the price of one of their smallest works! Going for six shillings—The immaculate contemporaries for six shillings! Sixpence more;—for six and sixpence, going. These voluminous folios of pomposity for six and sixpence—going going—gone!

"Nothing astonished me so much as the price of these invaluable geniuses. I did at least imagine they would have fetched ten times as much as the Gentle Naso,† but I find sound sense and heavy judgment is not the present taste of the present age."

About the middle of June he brought out the *Life of Parnell*,‡ prefixed to an edition of his works. The facts contained in the memoir are few, which induced Johnson to say, "Goldsmith's *Life of Parnell* is poor; not that it is poorly written but that he had poor materials." Whether he used much diligence in adding to the existing stock, may be doubted, though obligations are confessed to the nephew of the poet, Sir John Parnell; but no reference appears from what we find in it to have been made to his daughter who was then living. We are consequently uninformed of the private life, the domestic habits and

* St. James's Chronicle, June 14th, 1770.

† Who was meant by the Gentle Naso does not appear: Cumberland, Macpherson, Major Topham, and others figure in this supposed catalogue of sale.

‡ Published for T. Davies, price 1s. separately; or with the Works of the Poet, 3s. 6d. St. James's Chronicle—Public Advertiser, July 13th, 1770.

manners, the origin, accidental or otherwise, of his productions, the space of time they occupied in the composition, when they were published, or his mode of study, in short of all those circumstances that go to make up a life not merely domestic but literary, and which a daughter might be thought capable and desirous of furnishing. When biography fails to interest us it commonly fails from this cause. All our knowledge of Parnell's residence in Ireland, where notwithstanding his love of England much time must necessarily have been passed, is confined to the fact of disliking his neighborhood. But biography at the time he lived and in all previous periods was too much neglected by contemporaries in both countries, surprisingly so considering its importance, and the omission is now difficult, more especially in Ireland, to repair. It was perhaps with a feeling of personal application, that Goldsmith from what he himself experienced, was induced to make the following remarks on the public character of his subject. "A poet, while living, is seldom an object sufficiently great to attract much attention; his real merits are known to but a few, and these are generally sparing in their praises. When his fame is increased by time, it is then too late to investigate the peculiarities of his disposition; the dews of the morning are past, and we vainly try to continue the chace by the meridian splendour."

The edition he produced contained chiefly the poems published by Pope, who selecting from the papers of his friend such only as were thought the best, suppressed others of less value. Several of these afterwards published, were questioned as to their authenticity and merit, and have been usually disregarded. Goldsmith did the same; but he or his publisher, for it is doubtful whether Davies did not introduce them on his own authority, added two pieces, *Piety, or the Vision*, and *Bacchus*;* with the Life of Zoilus, and his supposed remarks on Homer's battle of the Frogs and Mice, intended as satires on the critics, Dennis and Theobald.

On the principal pieces, he gives a few critical observations, which Dr. Johnson in the Lives of the Poets remarks it would not be safe to contradict. All his opinions however were not equally well received. For an indirect preference of the *Night-piece on Death* to Gray's Elegy in a Country Churchyard, which is thus expressed, "it deserves every praise, and I should suppose with very little amendment, might be made to surpass all those night pieces and churchyard scenes that have since appeared," he received a very sharp rebuke from one of the professional critics† as being "blind to all excellence but his own;" while Johnson likewise adds in preference of the English bard, that "Gray has the advantage of dignity, variety, and originality of sentiment."

The fame of Parnell rests on the Hermit, one of the most beautiful poems in our language; the Rise of Woman, the Fairy Tale, and the Allegory on Man, are perhaps next in merit. His characteristics

* First published, as we are told, by Mr. James Arbuckle in No. 62. of the Letters of Hibernicus.

† Critical Review.

are ease, sweetness, and simplicity, which belong likewise with some higher qualities to Goldsmith himself, who seems in these respects to have superseded him in public estimation, for the Hermit though not forgotten, is less read than formerly. The remarks of David Hume on the subject of simplicity as applicable to this poet exhibit just taste and correct criticism with regard to his art, and deserve to be quoted as explaining to inferior critics the origin of much of the popularity belonging to Goldsmith.

“Those compositions which we read the oftenest and which every man of taste has got by heart, have the recommendation of simplicity, and have nothing surprising in the thought when divested of that elegance of expression and harmony of numbers with which it is clothed. If the merit of the composition lies in a point of wit, it may strike at first; but the mind anticipates the thought in the second perusal, and is no longer affected by it. When I read an epigram of Martial, the first line recalls the whole; and I have no pleasure in repeating to myself what I know already. But each line, each word in Catullus has its merit; and I am never tired with the perusal of him. It is sufficient to run over Cowley once; but Parnell after the fiftieth reading is as fresh as at the first.”

Towards the end of July he joined Mrs. and the Misses Horneck in an excursion to Paris. To this journey there is an allusion in a letter of Miss Moser afterwards Mrs. Lloyd, daughter of the keeper of the Royal Academy, addressed to Fuseli, then at Rome.

“Some of the literati of the Royal Academy were much disappointed as they could not obtain diplomas, but the secretary who is above trifles, has since made a very flattering compliment to the Academy in the preface to his *Travels*: the Professor of History is comforted by the success of his ‘Deserted Village,’ which is a very pretty poem, and has lately put himself under the conduct of Mrs. Horneck and her fair daughters, and is gone to France; and Dr. Johnson sips his tea, and cares not for the vanity of the world.” Immediately after disembarking at Calais he wrote the following lively sketch of the first few incidents that occurred on reaching the French shore, which has caused some regret that his letters were not more diligently continued.

“*To Sir Joshua Reynolds.*

“MY DEAR FRIEND,

“We had a very quick passage from Dover to Calais, which we performed in three hours and twenty minutes, all of us extremely sea-sick, which must necessarily have happened as my machine to prevent sea-sickness was not completed. We were glad to leave Dover, because we hated to be imposed upon; so were in high spirits at coming to Calais, where we were told that a little money would go a great way.

“Upon landing two little trunks, which was all we carried with us, we were surprised to see fourteen or fifteen fellows all running down to the ship to lay their hands upon them; four got under each trunk, the rest surrounded and held the hasps; and in this manner

our little baggage was conducted with a kind of funeral solemnity, till it was safely lodged at the custom-house. We were well enough pleased with the people's civility till they came to be paid; every creature that had the happiness of but touching our trunks with their finger, expected sixpence; and they had so pretty and civil a manner of demanding it, that there was no refusing them.

"When we had done with the porters, we had next to speak with the custom-house officers who had their pretty civil way too. We were directed to the *Hôtel d'Angleterre*, where a valet de place came to offer his service, and spoke to me ten minutes before I once found out that he was speaking English. We had no occasion for his services, so we gave him a little money because he spoke English, and because he wanted it. I cannot help mentioning another circumstance; I bought a new riband for my wig at Canterbury, and the barber at Calais broke it in order to gain sixpence by buying me a new one."

It was on this journey that the story printed by Boswell, of his exhibiting extreme jealousy of the admiration shown towards his young and beautiful companions, as if this were injustice to the distinction he thought due only to himself, first originated. Northcote in the *Life of Reynolds* has repeated the tale, with additional circumstances tending to confirm its truth, such as that "the town was Antwerp," "that the populace surrounded the door of the hotel and testified a desire to see those beautiful young women."

The absurdity of a man not absolutely an idiot, being jealous from motives of personal vanity of the admiration excited by his female friends; seems so incredible as scarcely to require contradiction. But having been believed and often quoted in the case of Goldsmith, the writer after examining the matter closely being satisfied of the incorrectness of the story, had written a page or two in disproof of its reality, when further trouble was saved him by an interview with Northcote, who voluntarily alluding to the anecdote expressed his regret that a statement so injurious to the poet, and which more correct information from the best authority had satisfied him was untrue, should have received further circulation by his means. From the same unquestionable source that he received the contradiction, namely from that of one of the ladies who was the principal party concerned, and who still to the delight of her friends survives to tell the story, the writer a few days afterwards received the following account:—

Having visited part of Flanders, they were proceeding to Paris by the way of Lisle, when in the vicinity of the hotel at which they put up, a part of the garrison going through some military manœuvres, drew them to the windows, when the gallantry of the officers broke forth into a variety of compliments intended for the ears of the English ladies. Goldsmith seemed amused; but at length assuming something of severity of countenance, which was a peculiarity of his humour often displayed when most disposed to be jocular, turned off, uttering something to the effect of what is commonly stated, that elsewhere he would also have his admirers. "This,"

added my informant, "was said in mere playfulness, and I was shocked many years afterwards to see it adduced in print as a proof of his envious disposition."

Of Paris, the same lady states he soon became tired, the celebrity of his name and the recent success of his poem, not ensuring that attention from its literary circles which the applause received at home induced him to expect. A letter of his written from Paris to Sir Joshua Reynolds at this time is still in existence, and records his distaste to France and almost every thing French; hints at the different impressions made on the mind by travelling at twenty (though he was twenty-seven when formerly in France) and at forty; wishes that the period of their sojourn had expired; and even projects the plot of a comedy to expose the folly of an English family going to France with the hope of living cheaply. With the same grave kind of humour as exhibited in the anecdote of the ladies at Lisle, and which on other occasions was mistaken by such as did not know him for serious discontent, he tells of one of his *bon mots* not being appreciated by his companions. For this letter which also adverts to the too familiar topic with him of pecuniary difficulty, the reader is indebted to the politeness of Mr. Singer.

"To Sir Joshua Reynolds.

"Paris, July 29th, (1770.)

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"I began a long letter to you from Lisle giving a description of all that we had done and seen, but finding it very dull and knowing that you would show it again I threw it aside and it was lost. You see by the top of this letter that we are at Paris, and (as I have often heard you say) we have brought our own amusement with us, for the ladies do not seem to be very fond of what we have yet seen.

"With regard to myself I find that travelling at twenty and at forty are very different things. I set out with all my confirmed habits about me and can find nothing on the Continent so good as when I formerly left it. One of our chief amusements here is scolding at every thing we meet with and praising every thing and every person we left at home. You may judge therefore whether your name is not frequently bandied at table among us. To tell you the truth I never thought I could regret your absence so much as our various mortifications on the road have often taught me to do. I could tell you of disasters and adventures without number, of our lying in barns, and of my being half poisoned with a dish of green peas, of our quarrelling with postilions and being cheated by our landladies, but I reserve all this for a happy hour which I expect to share with you upon my return.

"I have little to tell you more but that we are at present all well, and expect returning when we have staid out one month, which I did not care if it were over this very day. I long to hear from you all, how you yourself do, how Johnson, Burke, Dyer, Chamier, Colman, and every one of the club do. I wish I could send you some

amusement in this letter, but I protest I am so stupified by the air of this country (for I am sure it cannot be natural) that I have not a word to say. I have been thinking of the plot of a comedy which shall be entitled *A Journey to Paris*, in which a family shall be introduced with a full intention of going to France to save money. You know there is not a place in the world more promising for that purpose. As for the meat of this country I can scarce eat it, and though we pay two good shillings a-head for our dinner I find it all so tough that I have spent less time with my knife than my picktooth. I said this as a good thing at table, but it was not understood. I believe it to be a good thing.

"As for our intended journey to Devonshire I find it out of my power to perform it, for, as soon as I arrive at Dover I intend to let the ladies go on, and I will take a country lodging somewhere near that place in order to do some business. I have so outrun the constable that I must mortify a little to bring it up again. For God's sake the night you receive this take your pen in your hand and tell me something about yourself, and myself, if you know of any thing that has happened. About Miss Reynolds, about Mr. Bickerstaff, my nephew, or any body that you regard. I beg you will send to Griffin the bookseller to know if there be any letters left for me, and be so good as to send them to me at Paris. They may perhaps be left for me at the Porter's Lodge opposite the pump in Temple Lane. The same messenger will do. I expect one from Lord Clare from Ireland. As for the others I am not much uneasy about.

"Is there any thing I can do for you at Paris? I wish you would tell me. The whole of my own purchases here is one silk coat which I have put on, and which makes me look like a fool. But no more of that. I find that Colman has gained his lawsuit. I am glad of it. I suppose you often meet. I will soon be among you, better pleased with my situation at home than I ever was before. And yet I must say that if any thing could make France pleasant the very good women with whom I am at present would certainly do it. I could say more about that but I intend showing them the letter before I send it away. What signifies teasing you longer with moral observations when the business of my writing is over. I have one thing only more to say, and of that I think every hour in the day, namely, that I am your most

"Sincere and most affectionate friend,

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"Direct to me at the Hôtel de Danemarc,
Rue Jacob Fauxbourg St. Germain."

Some portion of this impatience to be gone, arose from a gentleman joining the party to whom he afterwards gave an Epitaph in Retaliation.

"Here Hickey reclines, a most blunt, pleasant creature,
And slander itself must allow him good nature;

He cherish'd his friend, and he relish'd a bumper,
 Yet one fault he had, and that one was a thumper.
 Perhaps you may ask if the man was a miser,
 I answer no, no, for he always was wiser;
 Too courteous perhaps, or obligingly flat,
 His very worst foe can't accuse him of that;
 Perhaps he confided in men as they go,
 And so was too foolishly honest? Ah no!
 Then what was his failing? Come tell it and burn ye,—
 He was, could he help it? a special attorney."

These lines, with the delicate dexterity shown in sketching nearly all the characters in that production hint more than they express; at least when at Paris they were not so well acquainted as afterwards, and neither the mind nor manners of Mr. Hickey were deemed the most polished—neither was he a favourite otherwise with the party; but being well acquainted with the French capital, served the purpose of a useful acquaintance. Goldsmith, whose foibles he could see without being able to appreciate his genius, had at this time from several slight disagreements, taken a dislike to him, and wished to accelerate the departure either of himself or the visitor.

The sense of his own imperfections in a religious point of view, was shown in a way to which allusion has been already made. During the stay of his friends in the French capital few opportunities having offered of attending the service of the church of England, Mrs. Horneck more than once requested Goldsmith to read the morning service. His reply invariably was, "I should be happy to oblige you, my dear madam, but in truth I do not think myself good enough."

His emulative spirit, or desire to excel in feats of activity which had gained him some reputation in Ireland, was here productive of rather a ludicrous result, communicated from another quarter. Being with a party at Versailles viewing the water-works, a question arose among the gentlemen present whether the distance from whence they stood to one of the little islands was within the compass of a leap. Goldsmith maintained the affirmative, but being bantered on the subject and remembering his former prowess as a youth, attempted the leap, but falling short, descended into the water to the great amusement of the company.*

At the end of six weeks, he returned with his friends to England. Soon afterwards when dining with Mr. (or Counsellor) Ridge whom in Retaliation he characterizes as "Anchovy" in St James's Street, he was asked by that gentleman in allusion to a projected

* "In going through the towns of France sometime since, I could not help observing how much plainer their parrots spoke than ours, and how very distinctly I understood their parrots speak French, when I could not understand our own, though they spoke my native language. I at first ascribed it to the different qualities of the two languages, and was for entering into an elaborate discussion on the vowels and consonants; but a friend that was with me solved the difficulty at once, by assuring me that the French women scarce did any thing else the whole day than sit and instruct their feathered pupils; and that the birds were thus distinct in their lessons in consequence of continual schooling."—*Animated Nature*, vol. v. p. 276.

excursion of mutual friends, whether travelling on the Continent made up to an Englishman by its novelty and interest for the sacrifices which it required of his accustomed habits and conveniences; whether on the whole he advised it as a source of instructive recreation.—“I recommend it by all means,” was the reply, with perhaps the remembrance of some circumstances which had annoyed him on the journey, “to the rich if they are without the sense of *smelling*, and to the poor if they are without the sense of *feeling*; and to both if they can discharge from their minds all idea of what in England we term comfort.

The design intimated in the letter to Sir Joshua of remaining some time in the neighbourhood of Dover for the purpose of literary application did not take effect, for immediately upon reaching England he received the news of the death of his mother who had been blind for some years; an affliction he endeavoured to soothe by taking care that it should not be accompanied by want. His inconsiderate conduct earlier in life had no doubt excited a degree of displeasure not unusual in an anxious parent; neither perhaps was she pleased that his subsequent life in London offered so little of worldly advantage; but there is no reason to believe that this occasioned any thing like alienation of feeling on the part of either, especially in a man of warm affections like her son. No particulars of presumed disagreement were necessarily known to his London friends; but an incident which were it true could be considered but as a whim of the moment, and not as indicative of disregard, on his part, excited notice in his familiar circle. It is told by Northcote in the *Life of Reynolds*.

“About the year 1770 Dr. Goldsmith lost his mother, who died in Ireland. On this occasion he immediately dressed himself in a suit of clothes of gray cloth trimmed with black such as is commonly worn for second mourning. When he appeared the first time after this at Sir Joshua Reynolds’s house Miss Reynolds asked him whom he had lost as she saw he wore mourning, when he answered a distant relation only; being shy as I conjecture to own that he wore such slight mourning for so near a relation. This appears in him an unaccountable blunder in wearing such a dress; as all those who did not know his mother or her death would not expect or require him to wear *mourning* at all, and to those who new of his mother’s death it would not appear the proper dress of mourning for so near a relation: so that he satisfied nobody and displeased some; for Miss Reynolds who afterwards heard of his mother’s death thought it unfeeling of him to call her a distant relation.”

Circumstantially as this story is told, we may suspect something of the mistake or exaggeration common in so many other stories concerning its subject. Northcote was not then in London, and consequently knew not the circumstances himself; what he afterwards heard may have been incorrectly told, as there seems to have been some indisposition on the part of Miss Reynolds towards Goldsmith, or after the lapse of forty years it may have been imperfectly remembered by the relater. A surer guide to his dress at this moment

is the authority already quoted, his tailor's account, where it is entered September 8th, in the same terms as the dress worn after the loss of his brother in 1768, and again for the Princess Dowager of Wales in 1772, simply as a "suit of mourning." Had it been half-mourning on one or other occasion the difference would no doubt have been expressed. The whim, had it been really indulged was harmless, not necessarily implying want of reverence or affection; and the story is only noticed in proof of the caution with which anecdotes of him even from seemingly authentic quarters should be received.

Tho relaxation enjoyed in France was as usual, to be made up by corresponding diligence at home; and he had been little more than a week in London when the following agreement for another compilation was signed with one of his publishers.

"Sept. 15, 1770.

"It is agreed between Oliver Goldsmith, M. B, and Thomas Davies of Covent Garden bookseller, that Oliver Goldsmith shall abridge for Thomas Davies, the book entitled Goldsmith's Roman History in two volumes 8vo. into one volume in 12mo., so as to fit it for the use of such as will not be at the expense of that in 8vo. For the abridging of the said history and for putting his name thereto, the said Thomas Davies shall pay Oliver Goldsmith fifty guineas, to be paid him on the abridgment and delivery of the copy; as witness our hands.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"THOMAS DAVIES."

From this design he was diverted for a time by another, which Davies, with a view to the politics of the moment, pressed upon him for immediate performance.

The excitement existing in the nation at this period from the supposed influence of Lord Bute, the unpopularity for a time of George III., and the imprudences of successive ministries in their contests with Mr. Wilkes, added to other unpopular measures, exceeded any thing short of open violence, which had ever been previously witnessed in the annals of the country. This feeling was increased by the low private as well as political character of several members of the government; it was fostered by a strong and able opposition in parliament; and out of it by the contention, from various motives, of such writers as Burke, Johnson, and Junius; of Wilkes, Home, Shebbeare, Murphy, Kelly, and a thousand nameless writers of various ability, whose labours on either side kept the country for two or three years in a state of extraordinary ferment. In these contests it was natural to revert to the political warfare of the preceding age; the days of Walpole, Pulteney, and Bolingbroke were retraced for examples; and several pamphlets of the latter writer, as being the ablest and in some measure most applicable to the circumstances of the time, were selected by more than one bookseller for republication. These were chiefly the

Patriot King, and the Dissertation on Parties; to the latter as a further source of interest, Davies wished a life to be prefixed, and on this subject Goldsmith was now employed.

It came out in the middle of December;* his name was withheld for the moment, contrary to the practice adopted in the biography of Parnell, from an apprehension perhaps of being charged with becoming a political partisan, though after his death it was affixed to an edition of Bolingbroke's works published in 1774. No great degree of secrecy indeed was sought by the publisher, for Davies in order to promote the success of his speculation took care to let the author be known. "The Life of Lord Bolingbroke," says the writer in the *Critical Review*, "is evidently written by the author of the Life of Dr. Parnell, who has no reason to be ashamed of the performance." The *Monthly Review*, after many sharp strictures on the work without mentioning the author in the body of the article, attaches his name to it in the index.

The immediate object for which this was undertaken offered little inducement to search for original materials, neither were these perhaps, judging from the little that has since transpired, easily to be found. Yet connected as was the subject of it, during a long and active life, with political intrigue and party, with statesmen, men of rank and of letters, an indefatigable writer himself, an eloquent speaker, secretary of state to Queen Anne and to the Pretender, leader of the House of Commons when in it, and when no longer permitted to enter parliament the leader of the opposition out of it, and as such corresponding largely not only with the press but with persons of various descriptions on state or other affairs, it is difficult not to believe there is much and not uninteresting matter withheld. The business of Goldsmith was to select from such as was known; to arrange in a clear and pleasing narrative what appears in a confused form in the *Biographia Britannica* and other available sources, introducing such observations as the incidents of a life so various suggested.

The character of Bolingbroke seems now pretty well fixed in general opinion; all perhaps that can be said in favour of it he lived to say for himself, and any new discoveries that may be made, instructive to the historian, as they will elucidate little more than political intrigue, are not likely to redound to his advantage. He was a man of eminent talents but of no fixed principles, or these hung so loosely about him as to be shaken off whenever it suited his interests or convenience. His ambition was in advance even of his abilities; and to gratify it he seems often to have deviated from the course of a wise or straight-forward man. Wherever we trace him in fact there is something to be seen irregular or inconsistent in conduct; tortuous, rugged, slippery, and occasionally dangerous, in his paths; but they were of his own choosing, and he chose them in preference to such as were more easy and perhaps quite as direct; and this may form one of the causes why of all the leading statesmen

* Erroneously considered by Bishop Percy, to have been first printed in 1771.

of that age, there are few however inferior their capacity who do not command more of our respect. Much of his conduct may be traced to the turbulence of his passions which commonly held the mastery over his actions; moderation in their indulgence was a quality little known to his nature, or one which he never attempted to practise. The ruling passion of the moment occupied him wholly. Thus, up to the age of twenty-eight a course of unbridled licentiousness gained him unenviable notoriety; when he entered the House of Commons he seems to have devoted himself zealously to its business; during two years afterwards when out of office, he was, if we are to believe himself, not less assiduously devoted to study. With a determination and efforts of labour almost without parallel, he negotiated as Secretary of State the treaty of Utrecht in defiance of a powerful party in parliament,—of the allies in the war,—of the great general then commanding our army,—and with little or no assistance from his colleagues in the cabinet; and with equal energy and art pursued persevering intrigues to unseat his colleague Harley, as first minister, in order to fill his place. We find the same morbid activity in the hatred with which for a long series of years he pursued Walpole, their joint opponent and successor, when he found him resolutely opposed to his re-introduction to parliament; and in the war against him of frequent and able pamphlets,—then of more weight than at any previous period of our history,—from the press; while with the same view, he continued unwearied efforts to organize and influence a powerful opposition in the senate, which his position admitted of no hope of being enabled to lead. But his labours did not terminate there. Having failed to disturb the system of national policy consequent upon the Revolution, he turned round with a feeling resembling desperate determination to perpetrate mischief of some kind, to assault the foundations of the Christian faith.

A striking evidence of his powers was the sway which he held over minds of no secondary order, over statesmen and men of letters, classes which in general sharply scrutinize a proposed idol before they make him an object of worship. Lord Chesterfield, the witty and the worldly and who thought himself above his fellows in penetration, thought extravagantly of his talents while he cared nothing for his principles; Prior gave him his love; Swift, a caustic observer of men and manners, his esteem and regard; Arbuthnot his applause; and Pope almost his adoration, for he made him, as he tells us, “his guide, philosopher, and friend.” The admiration of such men has imparted more of celebrity and consideration than past or present ages would otherwise have given him, though in fact he had, and has, no weight with either. His name indeed, not his merits, is secure of a passport to immortality by the address to him in the *Essay on Man*. But this has nothing to do with our esteem. Talents when misapplied, or perverted to mischievous and unjustifiable purposes, whether for the gratification of private selfishness or doubtful national ends, lose all their value in our opinion. In England we expect and ought to have some character with public men; it is due to our general and even individual interests as well as to the proud

moral station held by our country; without exacting an impossible purity from such as hold official station, they should be at least free from glaring impropriety; and in the instance of this well known statesman so thought the nation at large. Little confidence could be given to one whose principles were doubtful and whose morals had drawn down censure; who was known to be an unscrupulous intriguer; and who by accepting office under the Pretender and organizing the invasion of Scotland in 1715, could not be considered otherwise than a traitor to his country. With all his abilities therefore the political life of Bolingbroke was, and deserved to be, a failure; nor are there many who would accept the reputation of such abilities as he possessed, to be the subject of the same ungovernable passions, the same ungratified craving for political power, the same vicissitudes, mortifications and bitter disappointments in his chief pursuit, and leave behind him a name more than questionable in morals and religion.

Such a subject was neither easy nor agreeable to handle; yet the memoir is judiciously drawn up. He praises where praise can be given; but of one so objectionable in religion, morals and politics,—whom he characterizes truly as one of those “characters that seemed formed by nature to take delight in struggling with opposition, and whose most agreeable hours are passed in storms of their own creating”—“whose life was spent in a continual conflict of politics, and as if that was too short for the combat has left his memory as a subject for lasting contention,” it must have been a matter of difficulty to preserve the natural partiality of the biographer amid the truth required from the historian. The probable remuneration received for this piece was forty pounds, for it appears by a memorandum that in February 1771 he paid away a note of hand of Davies in his favour for that amount.

The attention drawn to the Poems of Rowley during the two preceding years, and the recent death of their assumed discoverer, the unhappy Chatterton, created at this time a strong interest among literary men. The question was variously considered by critics of poetical taste or antiquarian knowledge; some were wholly incredulous; and others continued to doubt; while a third party looking at the merit of the poetry, the quantity produced within a short period, the acquaintance displayed with the language and events of their supposed date, and the improbability that an imposition so extensive and difficult could be accomplished by a youth of sixteen, of narrow education, and confined to the duties of an attorney’s office, were led to the belief of their being genuine.

Among the latter was Goldsmith. Ten years before he saw at once the imposture attempted to be practised on public credulity in the instance of Ossian, but on consideration of the circumstances just mentioned, believed there could be none in this case; and sometimes stated his reasons in expressions sufficiently strong though not necessary to repeat here, in the societies which he frequented. One of these occasions was at the dinner of the Royal Academy, when his remark drew forth Horace Walpole to speak of his previous

knowledge of the poems and their discoverer, of which he gives a fuller account in the letter he thought proper to write explanatory of his intercourse with Chatterton, printed at Strawberry Hill in 1779.

"I supposed" said he "the pieces were of the age of Richard I.; that impression was so strong on my mind that two years after when Dr. Goldsmith told me they were allotted to the age of Henry 4th or 5th, I said with surprise, 'They have shifted the date extremely.'"

After stating the return of the poems when angrily demanded by Chatterton, and also of his letters, he adds—

"I thought no more of him or them till about a year and a half after when dining at the Royal Academy, Dr. Goldsmith drew the attention of the company with the account of the marvellous treasure of ancient poems lately discovered at Bristol, and expressed enthusiastic belief in them, for which he was laughed at by Dr. Johnson who was present. I soon found this was the trouvaille of my friend Chatterton; and I told Dr. Goldsmith that this novelty was known to me, who might if I had pleased, have had the honour of ushering the great discovery to the learned world. You may imagine, sir, we did not at all agree in the measure of our faith; but though his credulity diverted me, my mirth was soon dashed, for on asking about Chatterton, he told me he had been in London and had destroyed himself."

On a future occasion, conviction of the truth of his opinion of their genuineness, and an equally vehement assertion of disbelief on the part of Dr. Percy who could not always control his temper, led to a degree of heat that produced a breach between them, soon afterwards however repaired, although a contrary inference may be drawn from one account of the quarrel. "How frail, alas!" exclaims a writer who knew both parties, "are all human friendships! I was witness to an entire separation between Percy and Goldsmith, about Rowley's Poems."*

Afterwards when he saw a MS. copy of these poems in the possession of a friend of Chatterton, Mr. George Catcott of Bristol, and expressed a wish to become the purchaser, he proved to be, what was a common occurrence it is to be feared, without money. A note of hand was proposed; the reply to which is said to have been characteristic: "Alas, Sir, I fear a poet's note of hand will not pass current on our exchange at Bristol."

Part of the spring and summer of the year 1771 he passed at Gosfield and at Bath, with Lord Clare, who having recently lost his only son, Colonel Nugent, found some consolation in the society of the Poet. To this visit Dr. Johnson alludes in a letter written to Mr. Langton in March that year—"Goldsmith is at Bath with Lord Clare." Mr. John Gray, author, in conjunction with Guthrie, of the History of the World already mentioned, and of a translation of the Odes and Epistles of Horace, also notices this intimacy in a letter written some months afterwards to Dr. Smollett, then in Italy.

"In poetry we may be said to have nothing new; but we have the

* Cradock's Memoirs, vol. i. p 206.

mezzotinto portrait of the poet, Dr. Goldsmith, in the print-shop windows; it is in profile from a painting of Reynolds, and resembles him greatly." "To-day, July 9th," he adds in another part of the same letter, "I observe a new History of England soon to be published by Dr. Goldsmith, all for a guinea. I am told he now generally lives with his countryman, Lord Clare, who has lost his only son, Colonel Nugent."

On his return from this visit he drew up that amusing piece, "The Haunch of Venison," addressed to his Lordship, some hints for which are, as suggested by Mr. Croker,* derived from Boileau. No correct date has been assigned it in any edition of his works, the years 1765, 1769, 1770, being stated by various editors, whereas it was not published till after his death. The period of its being written is pretty evident to such as are acquainted with the history of the time by internal evidence alone, chiefly from the allusions made to temporary topics of conversation. Thus the phrase quoted in the following passage is from the love letters of the Duke of Cumberland, whose orthography and style furnished abundant matter for amusement to the newspapers† of the day—

"Left alone to reflect, having emptied my shelf,
And "*Nobody with me at sea but myself.*"

The writers who are alluded to in the lines;—

"They're both of them merry and Authors like you;
The one writes the *Snarler*, the other the *Scourge*;
Some think he writes *Cinna*—he owns to *Panurge*."

occupied the columns of the Public Advertiser almost daily during the end of the year 1770 and the spring of 1771.‡ As supposed organs of the ministry, they became topics of conversation, and as such are mentioned by Goldsmith writing at the moment; for their compositions possessed no principle of prolonged vitality, and were not likely to have been resuscitated by him when the occasion that produced them had passed away.

Several variations appear between the first and subsequent impressions, besides an addition of ten new lines, there being in the former one hundred and fourteen and in the latter one hundred and twenty-four. And as death had removed the author before the period of publication (1776) the MS. copy first furnished to the press, must have been one of his early transcripts, and therefore less correct than further research supplied.

The additional lines are—

"Though my stomach was sharp I could scarce help regretting
To spoil such a delicate picture by eating."

* * * * *

"There's my countryman Higgins—Oh let him alone,
For making a blunder or picking a bone."

* * * * *

* Croker's Boswell, vol. ii. p. 123. Note.

† Vide Public Advertiser, passim, 1770, 1771.

‡ See the months of September, October, November, December, 1770.

"Some lords, my acquaintance, that settle the nation,
Are pleased to be kind—but I hate ostentation."

* * * *

"So there I sat stuck like a horse in a pound,
While the bacon and liver went merrily round."

* * * *

And two lines in the original—

"There's a pasty"—"A pasty" returned the Scot;

"I don't care, if I keep a corner for *that*,"

he has converted into four in the amended copy—

"There's a pasty"—"a pasty repeated the Jew,

"I don't care, if I keep a corner for't too,"

"What the de'il mon, a pasty!" re-echoed the Scot,

"Tho' splitting, I'll still keep a corner for that."

In considering how he shall dispose of the neck and the breast of venison, he recalls as proper objects of the gift the names of the authors who found a frequent resource in his generosity. To the general reader these are now become unintelligible by the first and last letters only of each being printed; a degree of reserve scarcely necessary at any time, and continued perhaps only from the persons being forgotten. No such delicacy was evinced in the first edition, where we find them given at length:—

"There's Coley, and Williams and Howard and Hiff,
I think they love venison;—I know they love beef;
But hang it!—to poets who seldom can eat,
Your very good mutton 's a very good treat;
Such dainties to them!—it would seem like a flirt,—
Like sending them ruffles when wanting a shirt."

Wanting genius or industry, these writers have left nothing by which to be remembered, fulfilling the remark of Roger Ascham, applied by Dr. Johnson to many of what he termed his Grub Street acquaintance—"Who lived unknown men and knew not how, and died obscure men marked not when."

Of one only of the four named in the poem is any remembrance preserved, who proved an annoyance for some years to managers and dramatists, and a terror to the inferior actors in whose art he professed to be deeply versed.

This was Paul (or Dr. Paul) Hifferran or Hefferran, one of those eccentric and irregular characters who with some learning and conversational talents, assume literature as a profession but do it no honour. He was born in the county of Dublin, educated for a Roman Catholic Priest in France, but disliking the clerical office, took the degree of Bachelor of Medicine, and commenced the practice of physic in Dublin. Here the theatre, politics, and convivial societies, proved more attractive to one of his habits than the duller routine of a profession; he therefore made no progress in medical practice; a few pieces written on popular topics, familiarity with continental

scenes and manners which he rendered very amusing in description, and stories told with some vivacity and effect, made him acceptable to such as wanted merely a companion; a kind of ambition in which few who indulge are ever likely to ascend to any thing great or useful. Some account of him at this time appears in a letter of Mr. (afterwards the Rev.) William Dennis, who has already been introduced to the reader as the college friend and companion of Edmund Burke; the notices of Hiffernan, though new, are of inferior moment to the particulars we incidentally glean of the juvenile pursuits and studies of Burke, who when little more than seventeen years old, was with a few companions, more zealous than informed or discreet, endeavouring to correct or control the management of the Dublin stage under the elder Sheridan. No apology will be necessary for the introduction of this curious memorial.

It should be observed that among other frequenters of the theatre, several students of Trinity College took upon themselves to be dissatisfied with the taste or conduct of the manager; and in trying to amend what they considered wrong young Burke, and Heffernan who was much his senior although personally unknown to each other, agreed; the former as it would seem with the design of forcing the play of one of his young friends forward for representation. The result of their juvenile plots was a riot well known in theatrical history, which had the effect of driving Sheridan from Dublin. The letter, like that in the preceding page, and communicated by the same friend, is addressed to Shackleton, the son of their schoolmaster at Ballitore, with whom they were in constant correspondence.

“Dublin, Jan. 14th, 1747.—8 o'clock.

“*Arma virumque cano—bella horrida bella.* Nothing else to do, we the triumvirate* talk of nothing but the subversion of the present theatrical tyranny; lend us your pen; you have often drawn it for your own and friends' entertainment; now do it for their assistance and the establishing taste in spite of Sheridan's arrogance or his tasteless adherents. Don't think this gasconade, for we love liberty and consequently hate French customs. No, we tread on firm ground with Irish resolution and perseverance, resolving to pull down Baal from the high places, and that by (what is esteemed uncommon) the force of Irish genius, and establish Irish productions in the place of the English trash comedies and French frippery of dances and harlequins, which have been the public entertainments this winter.

“Doubtless you wonder what gave rise to this resolution, and suspect Brennan's comedy rejected; but it is not so; they promise to play it next March, but for fear it should be then neglected, or that the lateness of the season should prevent its taking, we resolve to bring it on immediately, *vi et armis*, against Sheridan's will; which is to be thus effected.

“There is one Dr. Hiffernan, a poet, a philosopher, and play-wright in this town, who stirred up by hatred to Sheridan as manager, and

* Burke, Brennan, and the writer of the letter, Dennis.

as we suspect by the rejection of a play he offered to the stage, is purposed to oppose and pull down that tyrant's pride. By his acquaintance with Victor* this Hiffernan got the reading of the Law-suit†, and was told Burke was the author, which is implicitly believed by Sally Cotter‡ to whom he told it, and by those means we came to know him.

"Ned (Edmund) Burke some time since wrote a paper called Punch's Petition to Mr. Sheridan for admission into the theatre, which coming into Cotter's hands he showed it to Hiffernan who persuaded him to publish it telling him he thought it a humorous, sharp piece. The notion of its going to the press alarmed us for fear it might hurt Brennan if there were any suspicion of Burke's being the author. This sent us to Cotter's to delay its publication, where I met Hiffernan. After some chat Sally Cotter attacks me about the 'Law-suit,' which I deny any knowledge of. Then Hiffernan began his opinion of it, which was most extravagant. He said it was one of the best pieces he ever read, and had the true *vis comica*, with other particulars too tedious to recite, and that with such warmth, as made me confess in the gladness of my heart, that I had read it. Then we talked of bringing it on the stage (without mention of the author) and he fancied it was practicable, and warrants the effecting it first by making a party of friends which he has secured already, which he calls an association in defence of Irish wit; then charging the town with a heap of papers on Sheridan, proving him an arrogant ass, and displaying his faults in the management of the theatre till having weakened his party so as not to fear opposition. Those friends in the mean time may spread a favourable report of the play to prepare the town for its reception when they call for it in the play-house, which desire of the audience to see it we hope to make general, so that Sheridan can't refuse bringing it on.

"Will not this scheme do? 'Tis partly our contrivance and partly Hiffernan's and mine, for (he) knows not either Burke or Brennan. Burke's paper has paved the way; three hundred were sold yesterday. On Monday Hiffernan in an expostulation from Punch displays Mr. Sheridan in a ridiculous but true light, which will take three papers. Next comes Brennan with a grave inquiry into the behaviour of the manager, which will be backed by Ned and I; and thus will we persecute him daily from different printers till the plot is ripe, and we have established liberty on the stage, and taste among the people.

"You must throw some hints together likewise immediately for the press and send them up. Talk how trivial it is to keep a stage well swept and painted, and the candles well snuffed, when teaching the actors and choosing good plays should be his employment, and hint at his indifferent performance.

* Afterwards author of the History of the Theatres of London and Dublin; and then, it is believed, prompter of the Dublin Theatre.

† The play no doubt of Brennan's, previously alluded to.

‡ See page 55.

And prove with us that you sincerely hate
The mighty Tom,* and all his mimic state."

"Feb. 4th, 1747.

"I send you enclosed the second number of the Reformer,† with this comfort that the generality of the town likes it I believe, by the sale which was about 500 to-day. The first number the town bought near 1000 of; we have set out *bonis omnibus*, and I hope shall continue the same. Hiffernan who was heretofore a friend of Victor's, has lost his acquaintance on the suspicion of being the author. Sheridan is much piqued, and his friends among whom is Sappho who admires him as a player, vigorously oppose it, and damn it as earnestly as they do taste every night at the playhouse in the applause they bestow upon dulness.

"Ned (Edmund Burke) is writing for his degree!"

In the celebrated contest of Dr. Lucas the Irish patriot as he was called, with the authorities of Dublin, and afterwards even with the Irish House of Commons, by which he was compelled to seek a retreat in England, Hiffernan took part in a periodical paper called the Tickler, which being in support of authority, found admirers among the opponents of the popular idol. He required however the means to live, which being found difficult in Dublin, he removed to London where a wider sphere offered for the indulgence of his dramatic tastes. All classes of society then evinced a degree of interest in stage affairs which few in the present day think it necessary to display, or indeed feel; men of all professions and pursuits conceived themselves to be critics, and many frequenters of the theatre appeared to think they had a right to become its directors; authors of all descriptions, unoccupied physicians, lawyers, and even merchants, prescribed rules to dramatists, actors, and managers; and those who could, and many who could not, write on other subjects, felt fully qualified to decide upon all that was necessary for the stage. Among these was Hiffernan. He began a paper connected with this topic called the "Tuner," in 1754, assumed in time the character of arbiter in histrionic excellence, became acquainted with actors who were laid under contribution either to secure his praise or silence his censure in the newspapers, and was constantly found in the lower taverns near the theatres delivering his decisions on such matters with an air of authority. Here likewise he was seen exacting fees from such candidates for the stage as believed he had the skill to instruct, or influence to recommend them for an engagement. His attachment to the drama made him known to Garrick, who ever careful of guarding against attacks upon his professional reputation, thought it prudent to conciliate many whom he despised; also to Foote, Murphy, Bickerstaffe, and others, from whom and a few physicians, booksellers, and casual acquaintance he drew oc-

* Thomas Sheridan—the Manager.

† A periodical paper, carried on chiefly by Burke, in order to correct what he and his young friends considered irregular or improper in the management of the Dublin Theatre.

casional assistance in the shape of subscriptions for books, some of which were never written, and some that were written probably never read. These consisted of translations from the Latin and French; "Miscellanies in Prose and Verse;" "The Ladies' Choice," a dramatic petite piece; "The Wishes of a free People;" "The New Hippocrates," a farce; "The Earl of Warwick," a tragedy taken from the French; "Dramatic Genius;" "Philosophic Whim;" "Heroine of the Cave," finished from the "Cave of Idra," a tragedy left by Henry Jones, author of the Earl of Essex, and probably others that are unknown. None it appears had sufficient merit to survive the occasion. He was not without learning had it been properly applied, though with few or no pretensions to genius. He lived in wretchedness, and seems never to have aimed at escaping from it by the exertion of active industry; yet he had pride enough to conceal his lodgings so effectually from all his acquaintance, that no ingenuity could discover them, although one gentleman is said to have walked with him with this view as far as Whitechapel, when he gave up the pursuit, as Hiffennan intended he should, in despair. It appeared afterward that he occupied wretched apartments in St. Martin's Lane. To Goldsmith he presented no point of rivalry, and was frequently an object of his bounty; and besides the allusion in the poem, we may readily believe that from him and such as him, the pictures of distressed authors found in his Essays were drawn.

CHAPTER XXI.

History of England.—Lodgings at Hyde.—Prologue to Zobeide.—Threnodia Augustalis.—Dr. M^cVeagh Macdonnell.—Masquerades.—Letter from Judge Day.

EARLY in August 1771 the History of England, agreed for two years before, and the contract for which notwithstanding complaints of his dilatoriness seems to have been pretty punctually fulfilled, appeared in four volumes.* Like the Roman History it was meant as a succinct and elegant abstract of our known annals; a medium for the statement of facts, rather than an opportunity sought of reasoning upon them. He claims the merit of having read much upon the subject, but does not desire to be considered "a reader of forgotten books" and is indisposed to display erudition upon minute or controverted points, or even to repeat new anecdotes, when all his space was required for matters which were material.

As Hume formed his chief guide, the facts differ little from what we find in that writer. Without wholly discarding reflection, or

* Public Advertiser, Aug. 6, 1771.

those pointed observations which give history much of its value, he has contrived to fulfil Dr. Johnson's idea of history, by "putting into his book as much as his book would contain;" and the ease and perspicuity with which this is done, add much to the interest of the narrative. Numerous passages, it has been observed, are transcribed verbatim from the "Letters of a Nobleman to his Son," many of which were marked for transcription by their writer, but their number precludes insertion here; while others are varied merely by the introduction of a few words. This saved him labour, and passed at the moment without observation. The critic failed to discover what he doubtless would have thought redounded to the credit of his research, and proved a fruitful theme for censure had he been so disposed; while the author probably willing enough to profit by this oversight of *the enemy*, was not reduced to the necessity of making public the avowal that such materials though seemingly borrowed were really his own.

Carelessness in slight circumstances, arising evidently from trusting to memory, is obvious in some of the details. Thus in treating of the civil war between Charles and his Parliament, Naseby in Northamptonshire, the scene of the battle, is mentioned as being in Yorkshire, confounding it no doubt with *Knaresborough*.

Another instance occurs in which, speaking of the siege of Londonderry in Ireland, so nobly defended by the inhabitants and a few soldiers against a large army of James II. in 1689, he mentions one of the chief heroes on that occasion as "one Walker, a dissenting minister," whereas he was a clergyman and afterwards a dignity of the established church. A private letter from a correspondent in Ireland* apprised him of the error which was corrected in the second edition. The person alluded to, occupies too prominent a station in the history of Ireland at that period to be so cursorily noticed. He was an extraordinary man drawn forth by the pressure of unusual circumstances, who having passed the usual term of human life as a minister of peace, became in old age a leader in war, and who displayed in that situation energies unexpected from his age and habits, and of the possession of which he was not perhaps previously conscious. To him the safety of the north of Ireland, and of the Protestant party, from the army of James, is

* *To Dr. Goldsmith.*

"SIR,

"I beg leave to acquaint you, there is a mistake in your Abridgment of the History of England, respecting Dr. Walker, viz.—one Walker, a dissenting minister.

"I venture to assure you, Mr. Walker was a clergyman of the Established Church of Ireland, that was appointed Bishop of Dromore by King William for his services at Derry; but was unfortunately killed at the battle of the Boyne. Which I hope you will please to insert in future editions of your late book.

"The Duke of Schomberg was certainly killed in passing the river Boyne.

"I am, Sir, with great respect

"Your most obedient humble servant,

"THOMAS WOOLSEY.

"Dundalk, April 10th, 1772."

said to be owing, and as a tribute of historical justice some account of him from private sources of information is subjoined.*

* The Rev. Geore Walker had been 26 years Rector of the parishes of Donough more and Erigle in Tyrone, when at the age of 70 or more, the disturbed state of Ireland, produced by the Revolution in England, involved him and all of his faith in imminent personal danger. The intrigues of James II., and the measures of his Viceroy, Tyrconnel, added to intimidation and outrage in various forms, seconded by the array of physical force, threatened at this moment extinction to the lives and properties of all Protestants. Ulster was the first province to make head against this tyranny, the contending parties there being more equally balanced than in the others. Great efforts having been made after James had fled from England to France, to secure Ireland in his interest, one of the means adopted was to despatch from Dublin several Popish regiments to the north to secure its strongholds, such as Dungannon, Enniskillen and Londonderry. This, the Protestants in aid of the main object of the Revolution, were desirous to prevent, and Mr. Walker was first noticed in raising men for the defence of Dungannon; but the preponderance of the enemy in the field soon drove them into the fortified places. Londonderry offering the best means of defence, his energy, courage, and skill became so conspicuous as to win the confidence of the inhabitants, who finding more than one of the chief officers in command guilty of treachery, at length elected Mr. Walker, joint Governor, first with Major Baker, and upon his death during the siege, afterwards with Colonel Michelburn.

The inhabitants of this small place, and particularly the "Apprentice boys" who thence derive peculiar honours and consideration from the event, left almost wholly to their own resources, exhibited extraordinary devotion and courage in defence of their city. The place was very ill fortified, scarcely a gun being well mounted, the military force within it small; and arms and munitions of war even of the ordinary stamp, very scanty in supply. Famine soon added its miseries to those with which they were already contending, so that horses, dogs, and all living animals, with tallow, greaves, hides, and every thing that could be devoted to edible purposes, were appropriated to appease hunger. To add to their other distresses, the enemy failing in their object by force, persuasion, and treachery, at length had recourse to the barbarous expedient of driving the unoffending Protestant inhabitants of the surrounding country under the walls, to perish by hunger and the shot of the contending parties, or by acting on the feelings of their relatives and friends within the town, to influence their surrender.

James with the view of hastening its reduction, sent thither some of his best officers, several of whom were killed while in command; the force before the town is said to have been at one time 20,000 men; and at length he came himself but remained only a short time. All these means however failed to subdue the resolution of a handful of determined men. The blockade continued for three months, followed by a close siege of more than four; the gates being shut on the 7th December, 1688, and opened on the retreat of the enemy in consequence of some vessels breaking the boom thrown across Lough Foyle and reaching the town with supplies of provision for the besieged, on the 12th August, 1689.

The conduct of Mr. Walker during this trying period, commanded general applause, as the safety of Londonderry was thought to embrace that of the whole of Ireland. He proceeded to London, published his diary of the siege in the autumn of 1689, received £5000 as a gratuity from King William, was promoted to the see of Londonderry which he had so valiantly defended (not of Dromore as is commonly said,) received the thanks of the House of Commons and the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity from Oxford, and by the King's command it is said sat to Sir Godfrey Kneller for his picture. Soon afterwards he followed William to Ireland, and being led by his ardour into an exposed situation, was killed at the battle of the Boyne. When word of this event was brought to the monarch on the field, he is said to have rejoined with some truth perhaps, but with little feeling—"What business had he there?"

A handsome column, surmounted by his statue looking towards Lough Foyle whence the besieged first derived aid, has been recently erected on the walls of Londonderry. Of the siege of this city, the Rev. John Graham has written an interesting account.

While receiving praise from some for the spirit and perspicuity of his narration, and others, among whom more than one of the professional critics pronounced that English history had never before been "so usefully, so elegantly, and agreeably epitomized," his supposed opinions on government became a theme of reproach in the newspapers. He was accused of being unfriendly to liberty, of wishing to elevate monarchy beyond its proper sphere in a free constitution, of not giving due credit to some of the leaders of the Revolution, and of censuring the conduct of Lord Chief Justice Holt on occasion of the trial of Sir John Friend and Sir William Perkins, where the historian makes the Judge to have acted "rather as counsel against the prisoners than as a solicitor in their favour, by influencing the jury to find them guilty."

These charges frequently repeated being at length thought to interfere with the sale of the work, a long answer drawn up probably by the publisher, not the Author, was inserted in the Public Advertiser. In this, in allusion to the conduct of the Chief Justice, the narrow minds and supposed professional prejudices of lawyers, with the little dependence to be placed upon their principles on great national questions if at variance with their interests, are treated with as little ceremony as Burke afterwards used on several occasions in speaking of the same class in their political relations. The letter is long, and with scarcely sufficient interest, as not being written by himself, to find a place here.

In private letters also as well as in conversation, he thought it necessary to defend himself from this reputed bias; and the following letter alludes to the imputation thus thrown out. Here we find his political opinions stated without reserve. We have also an account of his literary occupations at the moment which will be read with interest as exhibiting the too frequent unlucky fortune of our Author, who while endeavouring as he says to make others laugh, was himself far enough removed from a merry vein.

To Bennet Langton, Esq. at Langton, near Spilsby, in Lincolnshire.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"Since I had the pleasure of seeing you last, I have been almost wholly in the country at a farmer's house, quite alone, trying to write a comedy. It is now finished, but when or how it will be acted, or whether it will be acted at all, are questions I cannot resolve. I am therefore so much employed upon that, that I am under the necessity of putting off my intended visit to Lincolnshire for this season. Reynolds is just returned from Paris, and finds himself now in the case of a truant that must make up for his idle time by diligence. We have therefore agreed to postpone our journey till next summer, when we hope to have the honour of waiting upon Lady Rothes, and you, and staying double the time of our late intended visit. We often meet, and never without remembering you. I see Mr. Beauclerc very often both in town and country. He is now

going directly forward to become a second Boyle: deep in chemistry and physics.

"Johnson has been down on a visit to a country parson, Doctor Taylor; and is returned to his old haunts at Mrs. Thrall's. Burke is a farmer, *en attendant*, a better place; but visiting about too. Every soul is a visiting about and merry but myself. And that is hard too, as I have been trying these three months to do something to make people laugh. There have I been strolling about the hedges, studying jests with a most tragical countenance. The Natural History is about half finished, and I will shortly finish the rest. God knows I am tired of this kind of finishing, which is but bungling work; and that not so much my fault as the fault of my scurvy circumstances. They begin to talk in town of the Opposition's gaining ground; the cry of liberty is still as loud as ever. I have published, or Davies has published for me, an Abridgment of the History of England, for which I have been a good deal abused in the newspapers, for betraying the liberties of the people. God knows I had no thought for or against liberty in my head; my whole aim being to make up a book of a decent size, that, as 'Squire Richard says, would do no harm to nobody. However they set me down as an arrant Tory, and consequently an honest man. When you come to look at any part of it, you'll say that I am a sore Whig. God bless you, and with my most respectful compliments to her Ladyship, I remain, dear Sir, your most affectionate humble servant,

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"Temple; Brick Court,
Sept. 7th, 1771."

By this we find he had again turned his attention to the stage, the reception of the Good-natured Man not being so unfavourable as to alienate him wholly from the exertion of his genius in that department, or time having altered his first determination. Like many other authors when writhing under disappointment of their hopes, he had threatened not to write for it again. Such resolutions adopted in the agony of the moment, are rarely permanent; the very acuteness of the feeling, is against its endurance. The society into which he was thrown, many of them as managers or performers connected with the theatre, the tone of conversation arising from such connexions, the seducing popularity derived from a successful piece, and probably the representation of his former comedy which took place for a few nights in the spring of the year, set him to work on "She Stoops to Conquer." It was commenced about the time of his return from his visit to Lord Clare at Bath late in the spring of 1771 or even before that time, and finished as he says in this letter early in September. This perhaps applies rather to the first rough draught than to the play as completed in its present state, for afterwards it underwent several alterations.

A farm-house six miles from London formed the scene of his retirement. Besides this play, much of his Animated Nature, History of Greece, and other compilations were written here, and to this residence Boswell alludes when he visited it in the following year.

"Goldsmith told us that he was now busy in writing a Natural History; and that he might have full leisure for it he had taken lodgings at a farmer's house near to the six-mile stone on the Edgeware Road, and had carried down his books in two returned post chaises. He said he believed the farmer's family thought him an odd character, similar to that in which the *Spectator* appeared to his landlady and her children; he was *The Gentleman*. Mr. Mickle the translator of the *Lusiad*, and I went to visit him at this place a few days afterwards. He was not at home; but having a curiosity to see his apartment we went in, and found curious scraps of descriptions of animals, scrawled upon the wall with a black-lead pencil."*

The apartment, for it was only one which he occupied here till the period of his death though still preserving his chambers in the Temple, was recently visited by the writer. The house is of the superior order of farm houses, and stands upon a gentle eminence in what is called Hyde Lane, leading to Kenton, about three hundred yards from the village of Hyde on the Edgeware Road, and commands a view of an undulating country directly opposite, diversified with wood, in the Direction of Hendon. The spot bears evidence to his taste, for few places near a great metropolis are prettier. The owner of the house and adjoining land does not occupy it himself, but resides in the vicinity, a very honest farmer, Mr. Robert Selby, who holds the property from All Souls' College, Oxford; and with whose father Goldsmith resided. Being then about sixteen years old he remembers the Poet perfectly, and with some degree of pride pointed to the room where "*She Stoops to Conquer*" was written, a convenient and airy apartment up one pair of stairs to the right of the landing as we ascended. His recollections of their inmate, as may be supposed of a youth whose time was chiefly occupied in agricultural labours, are not numerous, but they are sufficiently distinct and may be worth recording.

It appears that though boarding with the family, the Poet had the usual repasts commonly sent to his own apartment, where his time was chiefly spent in writing. Occasionally he wandered into the kitchen, took his stand with his back towards the fire apparently absorbed in thought, till something seeming to occur to mind he would hurry off to commit it as they supposed to paper. Sometimes he strolled about the fields, or was seen loitering and musing under the hedges or perusing a book. More frequently he visited town, and remained absent many weeks at a time, or paid visits to private friends in other parts of the country.

In the house, he usually wore his shirt collar open in the manner represented in the portrait by Sir Joshua. Occasionally he read much at night when in bed; at other times when not disposed to read, and yet unable to sleep which was not an unusual occurrence, the candle was kept burning, his mode of extinguishing which when out of immediate reach was characteristic of his fits of indolence or carelessness; he flung his slipper at it, which in the morning was in

* Croker's Boswell, vol. ii. p. 177.

consequence usually found near the overturned candlestick, daubed with grease. No application of a charitable description was made to him in vain; itinerant mendicants he always viewed with compassion and never failed to give them relief; while his actions generally evinced much goodness of heart and great commiseration for the poorest classes of society.*

Sir Joshua Reynolds, Sir William Chambers; and other eminent men whose names are now indistinctly remembered, occasionally visited him here; once or twice it is believed Dr. Johnson was in company with the former. Among others who frequently spent an evening with him was Hugh Boyd, one of the supposed writers of the Letters of Junius, who resided for some time at the neighbouring village of Kenton above two miles distant. The road thither being excessively bad, Goldsmith having once paid him a visit on foot, returned at night without his shoes which had stuck fast in a slough, and anathematizing the parish authorities for their negligence, declared he could not again undertake such a journey.

When visitors stopped to take tea, which was not unfrequently the case, the hour for that repast being then early, he had the use of the parlour immediately beneath the room he constantly occupied. Here likewise he had, though rarely, a dinner party, and one is particularly remembered from the circumstance of a violent thunder storm coming on about the hour his friends meant to retire, who although with several carriages in attendance, were unwilling to depart during its continuance; a dance was therefore got up on the instant by Goldsmith for the young members of the party, and continued till a late hour.

On one occasion he took the young people of the house, among whom was Mr. Selby the relater of these anecdotes, to Hendon in a carriage, to see a company of strolling players; and proved not only very jocular on the road, but in his comments on the performance, which afforded all the party, and more particularly himself by the laughter in which he indulged, infinite amusement.

A view of the house as it then was, is in possession of the owner,

* The exaggerated view which excess of benevolence, and possibly the remembrance of unrelieved distresses of his own, induced Goldsmith to take of the conduct of the rich towards the poor, will be seen in the following passage. Yet surely there is something fallacious in the inference he seems to draw: or rather a querulous repining against the order of nature, and those circumstances that belong in common to the condition of man in all countries—against in fact the decree of Providence which has made him as unequal in worldly advantages as in mental capacity—

“There are many of our peasantry that have no other possession but a cow; and even of the advantages resulting from this most useful creature, the poor are but the nominal possessors. Its flesh they cannot pretend to taste, since then their whole riches are at once destroyed; its calf they are obliged to fatten for sale, since veal is a delicacy they could not make any pretensions to; its very milk is wrought into butter and cheese for the tables of their masters; whilst they have no share even in their own possession, but the choice of their market. I cannot bear to hear the rich crying out for liberty, while they thus starve their fellow-creatures, and feed them up with an imaginary good, while they monopolize the real benefits of nature.”—*Animated Nature*, vol. iii. p. 8. Ed. 1774.

but since that period it has been repaired and improved. Around the fire-place and on various parts of the walls, as Mr. Selby states in corroboration of what Boswell told us long since, were written over, some of the passages in Latin, and although the room was thus disfigured, he felt much reluctance in erasing during the repairs rendered necessary some years afterwards, these memorials of an eminent man whose conduct had won the regard of the family.

About three weeks or a fortnight before his death, feeling indisposed he went to London with the hope of deriving relief rather from the change of occupation and scene than from medicine, intimating to the landlady that his absence would be short.—“I shall soon be back, Mrs. Selby, and mean to remain as long as you will permit me; the retirement of your place is agreeable to me.”

After his death, Griffin the publisher, who had occasionally visited him at Hyde, came down, and after paying the small sum due for rent, carried off several of his papers and books which he claimed as being his property, having previously paid for the one, or lent the other for the purpose of his compilations; the claim which was no doubt just seems to have been admitted by his friends, for it appears by existing receipts that he had received considerable sums for works then only in progress.

Towards the end of the year he became acquainted with the late Mr. Joseph Cradock, a gentleman of fortune residing at Gumley in Leicestershire, at whose house he found an occasional retreat. They appear first to have met at the house of Mr. Yates, the actor; and the tastes of Mr. Cradock inclining not only to the performance, for he was fond of private theatricals, but to the writing of the drama, he had altered Voltaire's tragedy of Zobeide, which was represented at Covent Garden on the 10th December 1771, and well received. Goldsmith being applied to for a prologue through the medium of the Yateses, the husband being to speak it (though Quick was afterwards deputed to this duty) and the wife to perform in the play, sent that which now appears in his poetical works to the author, then in the country, accompanied by the following note:—

“Mr. Goldsmith presents his best respects to Mr. Cradock; has sent him the Prologue such as it is. He cannot take time to make it better. He begs he will give Mr. Yates the proper instructions; and so, even so, he commits him to fortune and the public.

“For the Right Hon. Lord Clare,
(Mr. Cradock) Gosfield, Essex.”

A memorandum at this time in the books of the successor of his deceased friend Newbery, exhibits him in the unusual character of paying rather than of receiving money; this had reference no doubt to the discharge of a debt contracted to the latter which has been noticed in a preceding page.—

“1771. Dec. 10.—Cash by Dr. Goldsmith in part. See C. B. 24—£20...0...0.”

The death of the Princess Dowager of Wales in February 1772, led him at the suggestion of some friends, and in repayment of some

obligations of his own which have not been clearly ascertained, to honour the deceased by a poetical lament. He gave it the name of *Threnodia Augustalis*, a term used by Dryden in a poem to the memory of Charles II., and objected to by Dr. Johnson as unwarranted by Latin writers although deemed by others of sufficient classical authority.* It was adapted to music and recited and sung on the 20th February in the rooms of Mrs. Cornelys, so long celebrated as a place of fashionable evening resort, in Soho Square. By the nature of the event no reasonable period could be allowed him for the composition; and it was therefore strung together in haste. He who writes against time, will commonly be beaten by an opponent whom in poetry particularly, it is more prudent to wait upon than to contend with. Hints were in consequence to be drawn from other poets to supply the exigencies of the occasion, among whom is Collins; an obligation which was thought sufficiently acknowledged thus in the preliminary advertisement:—

“The following may more properly be termed a compilation than a poem. It was prepared for the composer in little more than two days; and may therefore be considered rather as an industrious effort of gratitude than of genius.” The music likewise it appears was adapted and prepared in an equally short period.†

No honours being likely to result from a production so prepared; his name as author was withheld; but to secure a certain degree of favour from the public during its performance, a hint of at least respectable literary origin appeared in the following terms, in some of the journals. “The *Threnodia Augustalis* which the evening papers of last night announce to be performed to-morrow evening at Mrs. Cornelys’s in Soho Square in honour of the late Princess Dowager of Wales, we are informed has been written for the purpose by a gentleman of acknowledged literary merit.”

His connexion with this piece seems to have been known at first to such only as were concerned in getting it up. Boswell, though in London the following month, makes no allusion to what if familiar to the circle in which they both moved, would no doubt have been adverted to in the various conversations he records. Mr. Cradock indeed afterwards had a copy presented him by the author; and Mr. Steevens, as we have seen in a foregoing page, was subsequently aware of the writer being Goldsmith. An impression likewise prevails that it first appeared in print in Chalmers’s Edition of the Poets in 1810, while in fact it was published by W. Woodfall and sold at the door of the room on the evening of representation.‡ It is likewise

* “The word *Augustalis* is used by Columella, Sætonius, Tacitus and other ancient writers. It is sufficiently familiar to the ears of a civilian, for it repeatedly occurs in the Theodosian code, and in the code and pandects of Justinian. ‘*De Officio Augustalis*’ is one of the rubrics in each of the two last collections.” Irving’s Life of Buchanan, p. 286.

† The composer was Signor Vento; the speakers Mr. Lee and Mrs. Bellamy; the singers Mr. Champnes, Mr. Dine and Miss Jameson.

‡ “This day at noon will be published, price one shilling, *Threnodia Augustalis*, sacred to the memory of Her late Royal Highness the Princess Dowager of Wales, as it will be spoken and sung this evening before the nobility and gentry subscri-

noticed in the Critical Review for February 1772; but in 1779 had become so scarce that Evans, the bookseller, in the small edition of the Poet's works, collected in two volumes and brought out the following year, could procure no copy for republication.

Excepting the *Threnodia*, and a small compilation for schools towards the end of the year, he produced little for the press in 1772. It is not to be supposed he was idle. The operations of an author militant like those of excavators in a mine, may not be the less active and industrious, although unexposed to public gaze. Part of his leisure appears to have been occupied by the revision of his comedy still in hand, and in negotiations for its introduction to the stage.

The Natural History however as of more immediate pecuniary value, claimed the greatest share of his attention during much of the year, for it appears that he received at Midsummer the whole amount of copy money agreed for with the publisher, amounting to eight hundred and forty pounds. The legal assignment of the work dated the 27th June is extant;* it merely reiterates in the forms of law, the agreement given in a previous page. Annexed to it is the following acknowledgment:—

“Received the day and year already written (27th June 1772,) of the above-named William Griffin the sum of eight hundred and forty pounds, being the consideration above-mentioned to be paid to me. Witness my hand,

“OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

£ 840.

Witness,
George Corrall.”

A gratifying compliment was paid him about this time by Sir Joshua Reynolds. A line in the *Deserted Village*—

“While *Resignation* gently slopes the way,”

produced a picture personifying that virtue from the pencil of the President, who in return for the honour of the dedication of the poem to him, dedicated the print from it to Goldsmith, with this inscription—

“Sinks to the grave with unperceived decay,
While *Resignation* gently slopes the way;
And all his prospects brightening to the last,
His heaven commences ere the world be past.”

“This attempt to express a character in the *Deserted Village*, is dedicated to Dr. Goldsmith by his sincere friend and admirer,

“JOSHUA REYNOLDS.”

An allusion to this picture, admired by many for its expression,

bers to the house in Soho Square. Printed for W. Woodfall in White Friars.—A Porter will be employed to sell the books at the door of the house this evening.” *Public Advertiser*, Feb. 20, 1772.

* In the possession of W. Upcott, Esq., whose collection of such things, original letters, and autographs, is by far the most extensive in the kingdom, and exhibits extraordinary diligence in being enabled to bring together so many and such various memorials of the eminent of past ages.

occurs in a short poem addressed to Reynolds by Dr. Willis, complimentary to poet and painter.

“’Tis thine, oh Reynolds! to possess the art,
By speaking canvass to affect the heart;
See Resignation settled in that eye,
Nature can only with thy pencil vie,”

concluding with—

“And genuine taste may pleasure still acquire,
Whilst thou canst paint and Goldsmith tune the lyre.”

An instance of his habitual commiseration for the poor and destitute occurred about this period, which derives additional interest from being related to the writer by the gentleman who was the object of it shortly before his death; this was the late Dr. M’Veagh M’Donnell, a physician known to many in London.

This gentleman, who possessed considerable classical attainments, and whose detailed history would form an interesting page in romance, was descended from a poor but respectable Roman Catholic family in the north of Ireland. Having a brother educating for a priest in one of the Jesuit seminaries in France, he proceeded thither with the same view at the age of eleven. After a residence there of several years, he and his brother, whose health was rapidly declining, made an effort to regain their native land, but the latter died on reaching London, leaving the survivor destitute of friends or money. Accident threw him in the way of Goldsmith. By him he was protected for a time and afterwards recommended to a school, as a means of turning his attainments to advantage. Subsequently he studied physic, passed some time in England and on the Continent, aiming to establish himself in practice, but without success. At length according to the account given to his relatives, a brother physician and intimate friend named M’Donnell, a native of Scotland, being taken with a fatal illness, recommended him on his death-bed to assume his name and country as a means of improving his worldly prospects, and adopt if he could the Scottish accent. “As an Irishman you have failed, my dear friend, but as a countryman of mine you may succeed.”

The injunction was easily fulfilled, where there were none to inquire or to care for any appellation he thought proper to assume; and to the patronymic M’Veagh was added the legacy, not wholly unprofitable as it turned out, of that of M’Donnell. His residence on the Continent brought him to the knowledge of some English families of rank, by whom it is said he was employed in situations of confidence. During the early part of the revolution in France he is represented to have been placed in some trying and dangerous situations, but quitting that country before its more atrocious excesses commenced, established himself ultimately in London. He was a man of strong and original powers of mind, eccentric in address and conversation, though of considerable learning. His manner though labouring under illness in the interviews with the writer, was ex-

tremely vivid and energetic, his memory unimpaired, and his remembrance of the classics, fresh as if just risen from their perusal, bursting into momentary quotation. He communicated or confirmed several anecdotes mentioned in this work. His recollections of the Poet, for whose memory he entertained enthusiastic attachment, were noted down in his presence and as far as relates to him are given as nearly as possible in his own words. The detail of his first knowledge of Goldsmith had been previously communicated to the writer in Dublin, derived from the information of his relatives.

“It was in the year 1772, that the death of my elder brother in London on our way to Ireland, left me in a most forlorn situation; I was then about eighteen; I possessed neither friends nor money, nor the means of getting to Ireland, of which or of England I knew scarcely any thing from having so long resided in France. In this situation I had strolled about for two or three days considering what to do, but unable to come to any determination, when Providence directed me to the Temple Gardens. I threw myself on a seat, and willing to forget my miseries for a moment drew out a book; that book was a volume of Boileau. I had not been there long when a gentleman strolling about passed near me, and observing perhaps something Irish or foreign in my garb or countenance addressed me, ‘Sir, you seem studious; I hope you find this a favourable place to pursue it.’ ‘Not very studious, Sir, I fear it is the want of society that brings me hither; I am solitary and unknown in this metropolis;’ and a passage from Cicero,—*Oratio pro Archia*, occurring to me, I quoted it.—*Hæc studia pernoctant nobiscum, perigrinantur, rusticantur.** ‘You are a scholar too, Sir, I perceive.’ ‘A piece of one, Sir; but I ought still to have been in the college where I had the good fortune to pick up the little I know.’ A good deal of conversation ensued; I told him part of my history, and he in return gave his address in the Temple, desiring me to call soon, from which to my infinite surprise and gratification, I found that the person who thus seemed to take an interest in my fate was my countryman, and a distinguished ornament of letters.

“I did not fail to keep the appointment, and was received in the kindest manner. He told me smilingly, that he was not rich; that he could do little for me in direct pecuniary aid, but would endeavour to put me in the way of doing something for myself; observing that he could at least furnish me with advice not wholly useless to a young man placed in the heart of a great metropolis. ‘In London,’ he continued, ‘nothing is to be got for nothing; you must work; and no man who chooses to be industrious need be under obligations to another, for here labour of every kind commands its reward. If you think proper to assist me occasionally as amanuensis I shall be obliged and you will be placed under no obligation, until something more permanent can be secured for you.’ This employment which

* The reader will remember that the whole sentence runs thus:—“*Hæc studia adolescentiam alunt, senectutem oblectant, secundas res ornant, adversis perfugium ac solatium prebent, delectant domi, non impediunt foris, pernoctant nobiscum, perigrinantur, rusticantur.*” *Cic. pro. A. Licinio Archia.*

I pursued for some time was to translate passages from Buffon, which was abridged or altered according to circumstances, for his *Natural History*.

"I think it was generally believed by his acquaintance" continued Dr. McDonnell, "that he had graduated at Louvain; that is my impression. Perhaps it may have been Padua, for that university had Irish professors; so had Louvain; also Manheim; and likewise the College of Maria Theresa at Brussels.

"It has been said he was irritable. Such may have been the case at times; nay I believe it was so; for what with the continual pursuit of authors, printers, and booksellers, and occasional pecuniary embarrassments, few could have avoided exhibiting similar marks of impatience. But it was never so towards me. I saw him only in his bland and kind moods, with a flow, perhaps an overflow, of the milk of human kindness for all who were in any manner dependent upon him. I looked upon him with awe and veneration, and he upon me as a kind parent upon a child.

"His manner and address exhibited much frankness and cordiality, particularly to those with whom he possessed any degree of intimacy. His good nature was equally apparent. You could not dislike the man, although several of his follies and foibles you might be tempted to condemn. He was generous and inconsiderate; money with him had little value.

"I was abroad at the time of his death, and wept bitterly when the intelligence first reached me. A blank came over my heart as if I had lost one of my nearest relatives, and was followed for some days by a feeling of despondency.—Poor Goldsmith was himself subject to fits of depression as I heard from those around him.

"After settling in England, I had frequent opportunities of hearing much of my old patron from several of his surviving acquaintance whom I met at the house of Dr. Prendergast, an Irish physician, then resident at Richmond, who had made a fortune in Jamaica. Among others with whom we recalled his character and memory with fondness were Richard Burke; Captain Higgins, who had been an officer of marines and is mentioned in the *Haunch of Venison*, and who I believe was Goldsmith's companion when he beat Evans the bookseller; Mr. Hickey who has a place in *Retaliation*, a shrewd, quick, careless, but seemingly warm-hearted man; the Rev. Mr. East, once Editor of the *World*; and my old friend Tom English, a man of talents, but also, so often the attendant of talents, improvident, and for which he paid the usual tax of neglect and poverty in the decline of life. He had been, if I mistake not, a college friend of Edmund Burke; at any rate he was patronised by him, and upon the accession of the latter to parliament, English conducted the *Annual Register* under his direction, or at least those parts which merely required compilation.* I do not believe he wrote the historical articles in that work. He never expressly laid claim

* This fact, though it escaped the present writer at an earlier period, became known to him before his interviews with Dr. McDonnell, along with much other valuable and original matter relative to Edmund Burke.

to them in my hearing, though willing enough, like other persons, to have his friends think well of his abilities; but he has told me that when pressed by occasional pecuniary difficulties, Burke wrote political articles and presented them to him to dispose of for his own advantage. The connexion between them was certainly at one time intimate. English would retire to the 'Spaniard,' a favourite house of country resort at that time at Hampstead, or some other tavern in the neighbourhood of London, and remain for some time without intimating his place of retreat, during which to my knowledge, messengers from the Burkes used to be in search of him. The last time I saw him was at a house in Orange Street, Leicester Square, about the year 1799, or perhaps a year or two earlier; and there I believe he soon afterwards died.

"I recollect meeting Mr. Cradock, another friend of Goldsmith, at Paris many years ago in something of the character of what appeared to me then a distressed gentleman. He seemed a friendly and unassuming man. I had several conversations with him respecting the Poet, for whose memory he professed a warm affection. I remember he told me that once when in conversation with him the latter complained much of the attempts made by inferior writers, and by others who could scarcely come under that denomination, not only to abuse and depreciate his writings, but to render him ridiculous as a man; perverting every harmless sentiment and action into charges of absurdity, malice, or folly, concluding with 'Sir, I am as a lion baited with curs.' These remarks were probably levelled at Dr. Johnson and others of *his friends*, of whose sarcastic remarks on his conversation and manners he could not be ignorant; and it was perhaps one of the strongest proofs of good nature and forbearance, that he submitted not only to the savage reproofs of one who indeed was his superior in some respects, but to the insolence or impertinence of many others far his inferiors either as good men, or as able writers."

Goldsmith's patronage of the friendless, proved on a subsequent occasion, to be less gratefully repaid than in the instance of the gentleman who thus told his story. A native of Ireland, named Griffin, who had likewise been educated in a Roman Catholic seminary in France, and had found his way equally destitute to England, hearing probably of the liberal conduct of the Poet to his distressed countrymen applied for his patronage, and by way of making sure of countenance from some quarter, addressed similar solicitations to Garrick. His manner of attacking each exhibited some knowledge of character. To the heart of the manager he hoped to make his way by the channel through which he understood it to be most accessible, that of flattery, and therefore addressed him in a poetical eulogy couched in an extravagant strain, which had its effect. Trusting to the character for benevolence of the Poet, he simply told him a tale of urgent distress; requesting as an act of kindness to a distressed countryman, to be introduced to the good offices of the celebrated actor. By their joint recommendation he was placed at his own re-

quest as teacher in a respectable school, which he soon after robbed, and escaped to the Continent.

A favourite amusement of the Poet being a masquerade, his name appeared more than once in the newspapers in the list of such as were present, when Kenrick who seems never to have lost an opportunity of warring against his more gifted brethren, seized the occasion for pouring out his usual ribaldry. Some apology may be necessary for retaining this even in a note; it may serve indeed as a general specimen of the man and of his manner, as well as of the abuse, indiscriminate indeed and impartial towards all who had any pretension to celebrity, and of the trifling pretexts seized for assailing particularly the character of one who had from the first experienced his malignity.*

The writer of the lines being very well known, he and the subject of them met shortly afterwards at the Chapter Coffee-house, when the former was in conversation with another literary man. Goldsmith very sharply took him to task for presuming to take liberties with his name and by implication with his morals, in connexion with a place of general resort and amusement, conveying an intelligible intimation that as he had more than once indulged in similar attacks, a repetition of such conduct would be productive of *personal* consequences of an unpleasant description. Kenrick shuffled out of the difficulty lamely, protesting nothing derogatory to his private character was meant; but afterwards loudly complained of being publicly and *wantonly* attacked in the coffee-house by one who (in his modest estimate) was his inferior, and whose writings, conversation,

* “*To Dr. Goldsmith;*

ON SEEING HIS NAME IN THE LIST OF MUMMERS AT THE LATE MASQUERADE.

“ Say should the philosophic mind disdain
That good which makes each humbler bosom vain?
Let school-taught pride dissemble all it can,
These little things are great to little man.”—GOLDSMITH.

4

“ How widely different, Goldsmith, are the ways
Of Doctors now, and those of ancient days!
Theirs taught the truth in academic shades,
Ours in lewd hops and midnight masquerades.
So changed the times! say, philosophic sage,
Whose genius suits so well this tasteful age,
Is the Pantheon, late a sink obscene,
Become the fountain of chaste Hippocrene?
Or do thy moral numbers quaintly flow,
Inspired by th’ *Aganippe* of Soho?
Do wisdom’s sons gorge cates and vermicelli,
Like beastly Bickerstaffe or bothering Kelly?
Or art thou tired of th’ undeserved applause,
Bestowed on bards affecting Virtue’s cause?
Would’st thou like Sterne, resolv’d at length to thrive,
Turn pimp, and die cockbawd at sixty-five?
Is this the good that makes the humble vain,
The good philosophy should not disdain?
If so, let pride dissemble all it can,
A modern sage is still much less than man.”

and person he designated as being fit subjects for ridicule. He likewise took the opportunity of laughing at the mathematical knowledge of the Poet in consequence of a controversy (whether real or fictitious is doubtful) represented as arising on another occasion in the same house, when the latter maintained that the sun was not eight days or thereabout, more in the northern than southern signs, and being referred to the authority of Maupertuis for a contrary opinion, spurned it, saying with an affectation of authority—"Maupertuis! I know more of the matter than Maupertuis."*

It is remembered likewise that masquerades were sometimes chosen by wags of his acquaintance to single him out under cover of their disguise, seemingly without design, and either by praising, other poets and decrying him, by misquoting his verses, and then abusing them, or by burlesque parodies, occasioned him annoyance. One of these, a Mr. Purefoy, whom he did not discover, by continued persecution for an evening, at length drove him fairly out of the house. On another occasion, according to the late Mr. John Taylor, the Poet himself having teased a young lady who happened to know him, and giving way to laughter at his own wit, was instantly silenced by her quotation of his line—

"And the loud laugh that speaks the vacant mind."

Connected with this subject, an anecdote of his whim mentioned by Sir Joshua Reynolds, has been communicated by the lady to whom the reader is indebted for several contributions of a similar kind. Entering his chambers on one occasion the President found him in something of a revelry, yet deliberately walking round the room and kicking a bundle before him in the manner of a foot-ball of which the nature could not be immediately distinguished. On inquiry the article proved to be an expensive masquerade dress which he had been persuaded to purchase, and the occasion having been served and repenting perhaps of his imprudence in expending on such an article money for which there were so many more pressing demands, he was determined in his own phrase "to have the value out of it in exercise."

A sharp attack of illness of a peculiarly painful nature, not long afterward gave considerable interruption to his literary pursuits; the disease was accompanied by febrile symptoms, for which James's Powders under the direction of Doctor James himself, were administered with good effect; and this success impressed him ever after with great confidence in the efficacy of the remedy.

He retired soon afterwards to the country to re-establish his health, spent part of the summer with Lord Clare, Mr. Cradock, and it is believed Mr. Langton, and visited the Leasowes of Shenstone of

* The censures of Kenrick did not pass for much with his contemporaries. Langhorne the poet writing to Hannah More in 1776 says—"I hear you have had the honour to be abused by Kenrick; I think nothing would hurt me so much as such a fellow's praise;—I should feel as if I had a blister upon me."—*H. More's Correspondence*, vol. i. p. 23.

which he gave some account a few months afterward in a magazine. A rumour gained credence at the time, that his illness had been occasioned by the vexation of losing nearly one hundred pounds at play, though there is no good reason to believe that he ever at any time lost such a sum, or that he had it often to lose. More than one such illness beyond doubt was occasioned by severe application to his desk.

Much however has been said on this attachment to gaming, as one of the sources of those embarrassments under which he appears to have frequently suffered. The result of diligent inquiry on this head as far as inquiry can now be carried, gives little confirmation to the belief that serious losses were ever sustained from that cause; an impression to the contrary has indeed been so generally received, that to question it may seem like violation of historical truth, especially after what we are told by one of his acquaintance, if he be correct in his statement.* “The greatest real fault of Dr. Goldsmith was, that if he had thirty pounds in his pocket he would go into certain companies in the country, and in hopes of doubling the sum would generally return to town without any part of it.”

It is not meant here to shield him from an accusation induced in some degree by his own inconsiderate, or possibly ostentatious acknowledgments; for the vice being fashionable, he was vain enough to believe that confessions of losses by such means, enhanced his importance by implying there was something to lose. That he was fond of cards as a source of amusement, and exceedingly inexperienced in their use, we may believe; that he played at whist and at loo, sometimes perhaps expensively, but more commonly for trifling sums as is stated by one who frequently enjoyed this amusement in his company, is likewise true; but thousands daily do this without incurring the name of gamester, or sustaining losses of moment.

It should be remarked likewise, that of all such as venture to speak of his habits, a few only of whom knew him intimately, none state any fact in proof of the existence of such an unhappy propensity, or of specific sums thus expended; and it is improbable that such a practice could have been carried on for years under the eyes of his friends without particular instances coming to their knowledge. Such, if they existed, could scarcely have escaped the prying curiosity of Boswell, who while he states the general rumour, adduces no fact in its support. Neither has Johnson in his remarks on the foibles of his friend alluded to this which he might fairly reprehend as one of the greatest, and which had it been frequent or obvious must have fallen under his caustic rebuke. Sir Joshua Reynolds in his conversation afforded no clew to the persons with whom, or to the places and times at which, this passion was said to be indulged. And a surviving friend, when the question was asked whether the common opinion of his being addicted to this practice was well founded, gave the writer this reply, “I do not believe Goldsmith to have deserved the name of gamester; he liked cards very well as

* Mr. Cradock.

other people do, and lost and won occasionally; but as far as I saw or heard, and I had many opportunities of hearing, never any considerable sums. If he gamed with any one, it was probably with Beauclerc, but I do not know that such was the case. His habits otherwise were known to be expensive, and may account for his difficulties without believing them owing in any material degree to gaming."

In his writings he speaks of this vice in the usual tone of reprobation of a moralist, and in the *Life of Nash*, uses the very strongest dissuaves from its practice. In this respect therefore, if the charge be true, he resembled Denham, his countryman and brother poet, who having written a treatise expressly against this pernicious habit, was nevertheless unable to resist the temptation of indulging in it. Principle and practice we know are often at variance in the strongest minds; and his may not have been exempted from the too frequent infirmity of our nature, that of knowing what is right, but being unable to follow it.

A few further anecdotes of him from another quarter, belong chiefly to this period. They come from the venerable Judge Day, now retired from the Irish Bench, whose hospitalities at Loughinstown House in the vicinity of Dublin, being enlivened by several anecdotes of the Poet, he at the request of the writer committed them to paper; and with a few circumstances added afterwards will appear best in his own words.

"Loughinstown House, 20th Feb. 1831.

"DEAR SIR,

"I first became acquainted with Goldsmith in 1769, the year I entered the Middle Temple, where he had chambers; it was through the introduction of my friend and namesake, Mr., afterwards Sir John Day, who subsequently became Judge-Advocate General in Bengal.

"The Poet frequented much the Grecian Coffee-house, then the favourite resort of the Irish and Lancashire Templars; and delighted in collecting around him his friends, whom he entertained with a cordial and unostentatious hospitality. Occasionally he amused them with his flute or with whist, neither of which he played well, particularly the latter, but in losing his money, he never lost his temper. In a run of bad luck and worse play, he would fling his cards upon the floor and exclaim '*Bye-fare* George, I ought for ever to renounce thee, fickle, faithless Fortune!'

"In person he was short, about five feet five or six inches; strong, but not heavy in make; rather fair in complexion, with brown hair, such at least as could be distinguished from his wig. His features were plain, but not repulsive,—certainly not so when lighted up by conversation. His manners were simple, natural, and perhaps on the whole we may say not polished, at least without that refinement and good breeding which the exquisite polish of his compositions would lead us to expect. He was always cheerful and animated, often indeed boisterous in his mirth; entered with spirit into convi-

vial society; contributed largely to its enjoyments by solidity of information and the naïveté and originality of his character; talked often without premeditation and laughed loudly without restraint.

"Being then a young man I felt myself much flattered by the notice of so celebrated a person. He took great delight in the conversation and society of Grattan whose brilliancy in the morning of life furnished full earnest of the unrivalled splendour which awaited his meridian; and finding us dwelling together in Essex Court near himself where he frequently visited my immortal friend, his warm heart became naturally prepossessed towards the associate of one whom he so much admired.

"Just arrived as I then was from College, full freighted with Academic gleanings, our Author did not disdain to receive from me some opinions and hints towards his Greek and Roman* histories, light and superficial works, not composed for fame, but compiled for the more urgent purpose of recruiting his exhausted finances. So in truth was his 'Animated Nature.' His purse replenished by labours of this kind, the season of relaxation and pleasure took its turn in attending the Theatres, Ranelagh, Vauxhall, and other scenes of gayety and amusement, which he continued to frequent as long as his supply held out. He was fond of exhibiting his muscular little person in the gayest apparel of the day, to which was added a bag wig and sword.

"This favourite costume, involved him one morning in a short but comical dialogue in the Strand with two coxcombs, one of whom pointing to Goldsmith called to his companion in allusion to the Poet's sword 'to look at that fly with a long pin stuck through it.' Goldsmith instantly cautioned the passengers aloud against 'that brace of disguised pickpockets,' and having determined to teach those gentlemen that he wore a sword as well for defence from insolence as for ornament, he retired from the footpath into the coachway which admitted of more space and freedom of action, and half-drawing his sword beckoned to the witty gentleman armed in like manner, to follow him; but he and his companion thinking prudence the better part of valour, declined the invitation and sneaked away amid the hootings of the spectators.

"Whenever his funds were dissipated, and they fled more rapidly from being the dupe of many artful persons, male and female, who practised upon his benevolence, he returned to his literary labours, and shut himself up from society to provide fresh matter for his bookseller and fresh supplies for himself.

"I was in London when the Deserted Village came out. Much had been expected from the Author of the Traveller, and public expectation and impatience were not disappointed. In fact it was received with universal admiration, as one of the most fascinating and beautiful effusions of British genius.

"His beautiful little 'Hermit,' which by some persons had been

* Here probably there is an error. The Roman History must have been in the press previous to the commencement of the acquaintance.

fathered upon Johnson, and reputed to have been given by him to his protégé to help the Vicar of Wakefield into popularity, was by this time restored to the owner by the public, who had discovered ere now that he excelled in the art of poetry even his eminent patron.

“His broad comedy ‘*She Stoops to Conquer*,’ was received with scarcely less applause, though his friends Garrick and Colman had many misgivings of its success. His friends, of whom I was one, assembled in great force in the pit to protect it; but we had no difficulty to encounter; for it was received throughout with the greatest acclamations, and had afterwards a great run.

“I was also among those who attended his funeral, along with my friend John Day, Hugh Kelly, and a few others who were summoned together rather hastily for the purpose. It had been intended that this ceremony should be of an imposing kind, and attended by several of the great men of the time, Burke, Reynolds, Garrick, and others. This determination was altered, I imagine, from the pecuniary embarrassment of the deceased Poet; the last offices were therefore performed in a private manner, without the attendance of his great friends. He was interred in the Temple burial ground. Hugh Kelly, with whom he had not been on terms of intercourse for some years, shed tears over his grave, which were no doubt sincere; he did not then know that he had been slightly mentioned in ‘*Retaliation*,’ nor would he have been so noticed there, could the deceased have anticipated this proof of good feeling. Slight circumstances often separate even the most deserving persons; nor are they perhaps conscious of the worth of each other until accidental circumstances produce the discovery.—I have the honour (in great haste) to be, dear Sir,

“Your faithful and obedient servant,

“ROB. DAY.

“I have been in town almost ever since I had the pleasure of receiving your memorandum; and beg pardon for sending you so slovenly and hurried an answer to it. Some things have no doubt escaped my notice at present which may hereafter occur to recollection.”

CHAPTER XXII.

Table-talk and literary opinions.—Abridgment of Roman History.—Letter from Thomas Paine.—Anecdotes at Barton.—Westminster Magazine.—Comedy of *She Stoops to Conquer*.

LITTLE of his conversation at this period is preserved, and that little meager and unsatisfactory. The business of Boswell as he expressly tells us, was with that of Johnson alone, and therefore so

much only is given of the remarks of others as serve to make those of his principal not only intelligible, but forcible and triumphant. Thus, few associates of the moralist appear to advantage in his society, even such as were distinguished by talents, extent of knowledge, and conversational readiness; not because they did not exhibit brilliant powers on the immediate topics of discussion, but because so extensive a record was not within the plan, and frequently not within the power of the biographer, however well disposed his inclination, or accurate his memory, to accomplish.

Neither had he, as we find from the accurate investigation of Mr. Croker, so many opportunities of hearing these conversations as might be imagined from a cursory perusal of these volumes: of such moments indeed he made the best use; and it is our business not to lament that he did not do more, but to be grateful for his having done so much. Goldsmith therefore, notwithstanding the latent disinclination towards him already noticed, fares little worse than Burke, and so many other celebrated men, in being shorn of some of their interlocutory honours; and we may be permitted to regret that no other person among the circle of their acquaintance, excepting in a slight degree Mrs. Piozzi, found time or inclination to add much to Boswell's labours.

One of the opinions hazarded by Goldsmith in conversation, though no where noticed by either of those writers, was a lower estimate of our older dramatists than most persons of poetical taste and judgment now entertain. Ben Jonson, Beaumont, Massinger, and others, he more than once said were little more than second-rate poets; even Shakspeare appeared in his eyes infinitely lowered by his defects, and once or twice he hinted he was probably estimated beyond his merits; an opinion in which however at variance with the usual decisions of criticism, Lord Byron, who was not aware of the coincidence, seems to join. This conclusion may have been owing less to the deliberate judgment, than to the wayward humour and occasionally hasty opinions of both; for both often said in conversation what the former more particularly would have hesitated to advance in public as his settled conviction. Thus we find no traces of such opinions in his writings; Shakspeare whenever mentioned, is mentioned with honour; and if the paper formerly noticed, "A Scale of Poets," written in 1758, be really his, he receives all the praise a judicious admirer can desire. Neither can this degree of praise be considered less equivocal by the lines in *Retaliation*, written when his taste had been long settled, in allusion to Garrick where he tells us—

‘Those poets, who owe their best fame to his skill,
Shall still be his flatterers, go where he will,
Old Shakspeare receive him with praise and with love,
And Beaumont and Ben be his Kellys above.’

That he honoured his genius though fully alive to his defects appears from a criticism written in 1759, where he says, in allusion to the bad taste exhibited in many of the dramas of the age of Elizabeth,—

“Nothing less than a genius like Shakspeare’s could make plays wrote to the taste of those times, pleasing now; a man whose beauties seem rather the result of chance than design; who while he laboured to satisfy his audience with monsters and mummery seemed to throw in his inimitable beauties as trifles into the bargain. Massinger however was not such a man; he seldom rises to any pitch of sublimity, and yet it must be owned is never so incorrigibly absurd as we often find his predecessor. His performances are all crowded with incident but want character, the genuine mark of genius in a dramatic poet.”

The comedies of Farquhar and Vanbrugh, particularly the former, rejecting their indelicacies, he considered the best on the English stage.

Of Lord Kames’s *Elements of Criticism* he said, “It is easier to write that book than to read it.” Johnson admitted there was nothing new in the matter, but old things were told in a new way.

Pope found in him, as in all the poets of the past age, and in Lord Byron and in many of the distinguished names of the present, that warm admiration which his genius, vigour, variety and harmony must ever command from every reader of taste. The critical opinions of Warton, had failed to render his fallacies, although recent, a fashion, or to convince the judgment of the age he addressed, that the class of poetry to which that of Pope belongs, was necessarily of an inferior order, or that popularity formed, after the lapse of a reasonable time, no criterion of merit. Goldsmith estimated his genius scarcely inferior to that of Dryden; his judgment and versification some degrees higher. His character of Addison he quoted on several occasions as displaying a profound knowledge of the human heart.

Toward the poetry of Gray he was, as has been already stated, less favourably disposed, though from no unworthy motive; and without mentioning names, it is indirectly expressed in the *Vicar of Wakefield*, where we find marked condemnation of redundancy of epithet, one of the admitted faults of that eminent poet. Goldsmith considered this blemish as bordering upon mere expletive; a symptom of want of variety of expression, or vigour of thought; and seems to have written the *Hermit* in proof of how successfully one man of genius could avoid what he considered so objectionable in others. That ballad is introduced in the novel with the remark, that whatever be its other defects, it is free at least from the one he censures:

“It is remarkable that both the poets you mention (Ovid and Gray) have equally contributed to introduce a false taste into their respective countries by loading all their lines with epithet. Men of little genius found them most easily imitated in their defects, and English poetry like that in the latter empire of Rome, is nothing at present but a combination of luxuriant images without plot or connexion; a string of epithets that improve the sound without carrying on the sense.”

His opinion of portions of Gray’s poetry seems corroborated by that of another contemporary poet, Langhorne, who thus figuratively expresses himself:—“How enchantingly beautiful was Gray’s Muse

when she wandered through the church-yard in her morning dress ! But when she was arrayed in gorgeous attire, in a monstrous hoop and a brocade petticoat, I could gaze upon her indeed ; she made an impression on my eye, but not on my heart.”*

It is said indeed, if we are to believe Mr. Cradock, who however wrote at a late period of life and whose reports of mere conversations must be received with some caution, that Goldsmith proposed even, we may believe in a jocular moment, to improve the *Elegy*—“ You are so attached,” he is made to say, “ to Hurd, Gray, and Mason, that you think nothing good can proceed but out of that formal school. Now I’ll mend Gray’s *Elegy* by leaving out an idle word in every line—

The Curfew tolls the knell of day.
The lowing herd winds o’er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his way
And”————

to which the narrator makes himself very promptly and reasonably object.

He was fond of the amusement of a garden, and when on a visit in the country commonly passed several hours in it daily. At Lord Clare’s he had been permitted to build an ice-house and hot-house on plans of his own ; he volunteered to construct one of the former for Cradock, saying that as he had already built two, it should be perfect, and a pattern for the whole county. To this taste Beauclerc probably alludes when writing to Lord Charlemont, whom he jocularly urges to return to London for the following reasons—

“ If you do not come here I will bring all the club over to Ireland to live with you, and that will drive you here in your own defence. Johnson shall spoil your books, Goldsmith pull your flowers, and Boswell talk to you.”

“ When Boswell,” adds Mr. Cradock, “ was at Lichfield with Dr. Johnson he wrote a prologue to be spoken by some players who were performing there, and this caused a proposal that the comedy of the *Beaux Stratagem* should be got up in good style by amateurs. ‘ Then,’ exclaimed Goldsmith, ‘ I shall certainly offer to play *Scrub* !’

“ Goldsmith used to rally me” continues the same writer “ on my Cambridge pedantry, and I in turn hinted an illegitimate education. He truly said that I was nibbling about elegant phrases while he was obliged to write half a volume.” This hint if ever really given respecting imperfect education seems scarcely to have been called for, when it is considered, what Cradock did not probably know or remember, that the Poet like himself had been member of a university.

A question was started, how far people who disagree in a capital point can live in friendship together. Johnson said they might.—Goldsmith said they could not, as they had not the *idem velle atque*

* Correspondence of Hannah More, vol. i. p. 23.

idem nolle—the same likings and the same aversions. Johnson. “Why, Sir, you must shun the subject as to which you disagree. For instance, I can live very well with Burke: I love his knowledge, his genius, his diffusion and affluence of conversation; but I would not talk to him of the Rockingham party.” Goldsmith. “But, Sir, when people live together who have something as to which they disagree, and which they want to shun, they will be in the situation mentioned in the story of Bluebeard. ‘You may look into all the chambers but one.’ But we should have the greatest inclination to look into that chamber, to talk of that subject.” Johnson (with a loud voice.) “Sir, I am not saying that *you* could live in friendship with a man from whom you differ as to some point; I am only saying that I could do it. You put me in mind of Sappho in Ovid.”

When conversing at the table of Sir Joshua on the merits of Otway's *Venice Preserved*, which Goldsmith highly extolled as one of the tragedies nearest in excellence to those of Shakspeare, Johnson peremptorily contradicted him, asserting there were not forty good lines in the play, and adding, “Pooh! what stuff are these lines—

‘What feminine tales hast thou been list’ning to,
Of unair’d sheets, catarrh, and toothache, got
By thin-soled shoes?’

“True!” replied Goldsmith, “to be sure that is very like Shakspeare.”

Few readers or spectators of the tragedy but will agree rather with Goldsmith than with Johnson. Whatever the professed critic may tell us of how, or by what, we are to be affected, there is another and higher tribunal to which the tragic writer may appeal, namely that power over the heart and feelings with which no arguments can hope to contend. It is vain for him to urge that our sympathies ought not to be excited, or our tears to flow, by defective poetry; for these bid defiance to all critical rules. The characters, the plot, or the poetical merit of the play in question, may be occasionally not the highest, but the pathos is unquestionable; and it will be difficult to prove that this quality alone can exist and act powerfully on audiences for a century and half, and during various revolutions of taste, if unsupported by forty good lines of poetry. There must be fitness and appropriateness in one to the other, or the piece will not preserve its hold on public favour. If this tragedy be not wholly domestic, its most affecting scenes are certainly of that description, and keeping this in remembrance, even the lines censured by the critic addressed by Pierre to Jaffier in raillery of his delay and the influence over him of Belvidera, are natural and not beneath the dignity of tragedy. Such touches of familiar life and manners occur continually in Shakspeare, and no doubt, from their verisimilitude, give him strong hold upon the imagination. Goldsmith therefore seems to have been right; but had he taken an opposite view of the matter, there is perhaps little doubt that from the argumentative propensities of his opponent he would have been no less vigorously opposed.

In a conversation at General Oglethorpe's, Boswell started the question, whether duelling was consistent with moral duty. Goldsmith, turning to him said, "I ask you first, Sir, what you would do if you were affronted?" The reply was that he would deem it necessary to fight. "Why then," observed the Poet, "that solves the question." Johnson denied that this reasoning was conclusive, but admitted that as the refinements of society require a man who receives an affront to resent it, so duelling under such circumstances becomes a species of self-defence.

Whether this conclusion which differs little from that of Goldsmith, forms a sufficient apology for a practice that most men, even when they have recourse to it, condemn, may be doubtful. Affronts or injuries are no doubt difficult to bear patiently; neither the religion nor the philosophy of him who submits to them quietly, receives much credit for forbearance; and yet we can have no stronger evidence of the justifiable nature of the deed than that persons who have been engaged in one fatal duel will often sooner submit to an affront than be tempted to embark in a second. Their feelings and convictions condemn it even without higher motives. But while offences are thus compelled to be resented, the evils of duelling may be in practice materially mitigated, nay extinguished, by a little discretion in those who are called upon to act in the character of friends or seconds; for these have the power, if possessed of sufficient good feeling and good sense to use it, to prevent such encounters.

Few duels are fought in consequence of serious injuries; nor among those who resort to this method of vindicating a punctilio, are there many influenced by so malignant a spirit as really to wish to slay the person with whom they contend. An apology can expiate the great majority of offences for which duels are fought; but as heat, ill temper, or mistaken pride, may prevent an aggressor from doing this voluntarily, the only real use of a second is, in the character of his friend, to point out the propriety and the necessity of concession. It is the business of a person so called upon, to judge the quarrel dispassionately as an umpire, not as a partisan; to do that for his principal, which the latter from irritation is unable or unwilling to do for himself; and to make him who is in the wrong, which is seldom difficult to discover, render the necessary reparation. If this be declined by an angry or pertinacious man, it is the obvious duty of the second immediately to surrender his office; for there can be no obligation of friendship to compel him to abet and uphold another in an unjust or vindictive proceeding. Were this done invariably by the friends of both parties, there would be few duels. Men will rarely fight alone. Fatal results therefore may be almost always traced to the improper conduct of one or both of the seconds, who should be held by the law and by society, sternly responsible for their conduct. For the principals on such an occasion, acting frequently under the influence of passion, there may be some commiseration; but for the seconds who have no such apology to plead and who come to the consideration of the matter in cold blood, there ought to be no excuse, and seldom forgiveness.

The Abridgment of the Roman History, contracted for two years before for fifty guineas, appeared early in December. The volume was small, intended merely for schools, and therefore executed only as a matter of trade, not of inclination.

A letter addressed to him about the same period will be read with some degree of attention on account of the notoriety of the name of the writer, the well-known Thomas Paine. This period seems to have been nearly the dawning of that spirit of mischief by which he was afterwards influenced, for though now serving in the humble capacity of officer of excise, he sought an opportunity to take the lead in producing among his brethren, whether with sufficient cause or not, the same feeling of discontent with their situation which he afterwards fostered upon a larger scale against the institutions of his country. His claim to be considered "singularly modest," a quality which appears to have been of short continuance, will amuse the reader. The reputation of Goldsmith induced a variety of similar applications for advice upon, or the revision of, literary works; but in this instance as the pamphlet had been circulated and produced all its intended effect, the cause of intrusion seems to have been more an excuse to make his acquaintance than a reference to his opinion.

From Thomas Paine.

"HONOURED SIR,

"Herewith I present you with the case of the officers of excise. A compliment of this kind from an entire stranger may appear somewhat singular; but the following reasons and information will I presume sufficiently apologize.

"I act myself in the humble station of an officer of excise, though somewhat differently circumstanced to what many of them are, and have been the principal promoter of a plan for applying to parliament this session for an increase of salary. A petition for this purpose has been circulated through every part of the kingdom and signed by all the officers therein. A subscription of three shillings per officer is raised, amounting to upwards of five hundred pounds, for supporting the expenses.

"The excise officers in all cities and corporate towns have obtained letters of recommendation from the electors to the members in their behalf, many or most of whom have promised their support. The enclosed case we have presented to most of the members, and shall to all, before the petition appear in the House.

"The memorial before you met with so much approbation while in manuscript, that I was advised to print four thousand copies: three thousand of which were subscribed for by the officers in general, and the remaining one thousand reserved for presents.

"Since the delivering them, I have received so many letters of thanks and approbation for the performance, that were I not rather singularly modest, I should insensibly become a little vain.

"The literary fame of Dr. Goldsmith has induced me to present one to him such as it is. 'Tis my first and only attempt, and even

now I should not have undertaken it, had I not been particularly applied to by some of my superiors in office.

"I have some few questions to trouble Dr. Goldsmith with, and should esteem his company for an hour or two, to partake of a bottle of wine or any thing else, and apologize for this trouble, as a singular favour conferred on his unknown humble servant and admirer,

"THOMAS PAINE.

"Excise Coffee House, Broad Street,

"December 21, 1772."

"P. S. Shall take the liberty of waiting on you in a day or two."

A correspondent of a very different description drew from him in reply a letter in prose and verse, which has all his characteristic humour. His acquaintance, Miss Catherine Horneck became in August 1771 the wife of Henry William Bunbury Esq. celebrated for the powers of his pencil, and having addressed an invitation to him in a rhyming and jocular strain to spend some time at their seat at Barton in Suffolk, he answered it in a similar manner. The first part in prose has that air of assumed severity, to which allusion has been made as being liable to be mistaken in conversation for ill humour, particularly in literary matters, where a spirit of rivalry might be supposed to exist. After some mock solemnity of criticism on Mrs. Bunbury's verses, and her advice in playing the game of loo, he feels inspired, he says, at once with verse and resentment:

"First let me suppose what may shortly be true,
The company set and the word to be Loo;
All smirking and pleasant and big with adventure,
And ogling the stake which is fixed in the centre."

The progress of the game, the supposed loss of his money from the advice of the ladies, and his imaginary revenge in bringing them to the bar of the Old Bailey—

"For giving advice that is not worth a straw,
May well be called picking of pockets in law,"

render this one of his pleasantest trifles. It is now printed for the first time in the new edition of his works.

While at Barton, where his society was often sought as the writer learns from one of the party, who entertains great regard for his memory, his manners were always playful and amusing, taking the lead in promoting any scheme of innocent mirth, and usually prefacing the invitation by "Come now and let us play the fool a little." At cards, which was commonly a round game and the stake small, he was always the most noisy, affected great eagerness to win, and teased his opponents of the gentler sex with continual jest and banter on their want of spirit in not risking the hazards of the game. But one of his most favourite enjoyments

was to romp with children, when he threw off all reserve and seemed one of the most joyous of the group.

"His simplicity of manners" continued my informant "made him occasionally the object of tricks of the jocular kind to other visitors of the house. Being at all times gay in dress, he made his appearance at the breakfast table in a smart black silk coat with an expensive pair of ruffles; the coat some one contrived to soil, and it was sent to be cleansed; but either by accident or probably design the day after it came home the sleeves became daubed with paint, which was not discovered until the ruffles also, to his great mortification, were irretrievably disfigured.

"He always wore a wig, a peculiarity which those who judge of his appearance only from the fine poetical head by Reynolds, would not suspect; and on one occasion some person contrived seriously to injure this important adjunct to dress. It was the only one he had in the country, and the misfortune seemed irreparable until the services of Mr. Bunbury's valet were called in, who however performed his functions so indifferently that poor Goldsmith's appearance became the signal for a general smile.

"On another occasion some difference of opinion having arisen with Lord Harrington respecting the depth of a pond, the Poet remarked that it was not so deep but that if any thing valuable was to be found at the bottom he would not hesitate to pick it up. His lordship after some banter, threw in a guinea; Goldsmith not to be outdone in this kind of bravado, in attempting to fulfil his promise without getting wet, accidentally fell in, to the amusement of all present, but persevered, brought out the money and kept it, remarking that he had abundant objects on whom to bestow any further proofs of his Lordship's whim or bounty.

"His benevolence was unquestionable, and his countenance bore every trace of it. He was a very plain man, but had he been much more so, it was impossible not to love and respect his goodness of heart, which broke out upon every occasion; no one that knew him intimately could avoid admiring and loving his good qualities. They accused him of envy but it certainly was not envy in the usual sense of that word; he was jealous perhaps of giving praise where he thought praise was not due; but I am sure that on many occasions from the peculiar manner of his humour and assumed frown of countenance, that what was often uttered in jest was mistaken by those that did not know him for earnest.

"The expression of his countenance is most happily caught in one of the sketches of Mr. Bunbury which gives the head with admirable fidelity as he actually lived among us; nothing can exceed its truth.

"There are others by the same gentleman executed in a sportive vein, and therefore caricatured. The head by Reynolds is a fine portrait, and likewise conveys a good idea of his face; it was painted as a fine poetical head for the admiration of posterity, but as it is divested of his wig and with the shirt collar open, it was not the man as seen in daily life. This however detracts nothing from

the merit of the painting of that great artist and amiable man, whom from an early period till his death, I had the honour to number among my most particular friends.

"One of the means by which he amused us was his songs, chiefly of the comic kind, which were sung with some taste and humour; several I believe were of his own composition, and I regret that I neither have copies which might have been readily procured from him at the time, nor do I remember their names."

To this talent for singing Boswell alludes in his journal in 1773—"We drank tea with the ladies (the dinner was at General Oglethorpe's;) and Goldsmith sung Tony Lumpkin's song in his comedy 'She Stoops to Conquer,' and a very pretty one to an Irish tune which he had designed for Miss Hardcastle; but as Mrs. Bulkeley who played the part could not sing, it was left out. He afterwards wrote it down for me by which means it was preserved and now appears amongst his poems."

On another occasion when at the house of Sir Joshua and a large party of ladies were present, a ballad singer under the window chanced to sing one of his favourite airs, "Sally Salisbury," and on remarking its miserable execution, was questioned in a lively manner by one of the party whether he could do it better. The reply was in the affirmative, and on being requested to indulge the company with the song, he immediately complied, and acquitted himself so well as to receive the approbation of all present.

Toward the end of the year 1772, a new Magazine, *The Westminster*, commenced, among the contributors to which were Capt. Edward Thompson of the navy, author of some dramatic pieces, songs, and *The Sailor's Letters*, and afterwards Isaac Reed and the Rev. Mr. Badcock. Goldsmith also it is pretty certain wrote a few of the earlier articles. These are in the first number, "The History of a Poet's Garden," meaning the Leasowes of Shenstone, and 'A Comparison between Laughing and Sentimental Comedy,' intended as a preparative perhaps to the appearance of *She Stoops to Conquer*; in the February number, "A Register of Scotch Marriages," and a notice of the *Sleep Walker*, *Cyrillo Padrovana*. These appear in his *Essays* published by Reed in 1797, though the three former only are given by Bishop Percy in the edition of his works. Little doubt can be entertained of their authenticity, being retained on the authority of Malone and Steevens, as well as of Reed; and the probable reason of the cessation of his communications to that work was the success of his comedy the following month, the moderate praise of it in the magazine, and the introduction at the same time of a few anecdotes exhibiting the jokes practised upon his simplicity.

From the commencement of the theatrical season 1772-73, he had been anxiously endeavouring to procure the representation of his play written as we have seen more than a year before, at one of the theatres. To those unacquainted with such matters, the affair may seem to have been of easy accomplishment to a writer of celebrity who enjoyed personal intimacy with both managers; but Goldsmith

found it otherwise. Friendship by no means implies favour on such occasions; tastes and judgments on dramatic productions may reasonably differ; but the politics of the theatre have the reputation of being subject to as many under, and counter, influences, as those that affect more extended and important interests, and are little less difficult successfully to manage.

The play was first placed in the hands of Mr. Colman of Covent Garden, who soon intimated verbally a variety of objections to its probable success; and after a considerable interval, returned the manuscript with his remarks written on the blank sides of the leaves, in contravention, as it seems to have been considered, of the laws of politeness. These the poet did not hesitate to show to some of his friends, by whom they were pronounced unfair, or in the language employed in the journals, "envious, insipid and contemptible." It was then submitted to Garrick who displayed his usual aversion to give a plain and direct answer; for though he did not condemn it, the hesitation to approve was understood as a sufficient indication of an opinion similar to that of his brother manager. In this state of suspense the friends of the author, among whom was Dr. Johnson, applied to Colman again, who after urgent solicitations yielded reluctant assent to its being brought forward at his theatre.

The boon thus unwillingly conceded, Goldsmith found it necessary to accept; the season was late; Lent and the benefits were at hand; and these, however successful might be the play, must interfere with the run and productiveness to the managers as well as to the author. All the circumstances of its rejection and subsequent acceptance soon acquired general publicity and excited unusual interest; several anonymous advocates of the poet insisted that he had been ungenerously treated; that the delay in first returning the manuscript, the period of its subsequent acceptance, and the dissemination of the unfavourable opinion of the manager, were the acts of a jealous, rival dramatist, desirous of its condemnation; and that had he meant it should be fairly dealt by, there was abundant time by the prompt withdrawal of an opera by Kenrick which was not really meant to be brought forward, to represent it at an advantageous part of the season. Delay for another year was however inconsistent with the necessities of the Author; neither perhaps was he disposed to put faith in the promises of Colman to bring it on early next season, for he was known to have a comedy of his own in forwardness—(the *Man of Business*)—and possessing the power, was not likely to let the production of another interfere with the success of that in which he was so much more interested.

Some blame in this affair certainly appears imputable to the manager; not perhaps for his opinion of the play if that were a sincere opinion, but for the publicity, injudiciously if not unfairly, given to it. All the friends of both parties, the performers of the theatre, and a few of the newspapers, repeated without reserve his predictions of its failure; but the author felt and expressed extreme and not unreasonable indignation, that this anticipation should have been repeated by the box-keepers to the servant of the Duke of Gloucester

while he was engaging the stage box for his Royal Highness. To the manager's and his own opinion of the play, Dr. Johnson alludes in a letter to Boswell, dated February 22d, 1773.

"Dr. Goldsmith has a new comedy which is expected in the spring. No name is yet given it. The chief diversion arises from a stratagem by which a lover is made to mistake his future father-in-law's house for an inn. This you see borders upon farce. The dialogue is quick and gay, and the incidents are so prepared as not to seem improbable." To the Rev. Mr. White, afterwards Bishop of the Episcopal Church in Pennsylvania, he writes on the 4th of March; "Dr. Goldsmith has a new comedy in rehearsal at Covent Garden, to which the manager predicts ill success. I hope he will be mistaken. I think it deserves a very kind reception." Speaking on the same subject some years after the death of the Poet (1778) he said, "Both Goldsmith's comedies were once refused; his first by Garrick, his second by Colman, who was prevailed on at last by much solicitation, nay, a kind of force, to bring it on."

Adverting to the same general topic, the probable failure of the play, *Northcote*, then a young man and living with Sir Joshua, thus writes to his brother, March 24th 1773.*

"Last Monday I went to see Goldsmith's new play, and quite the reverse to every body's expectation, it was received with the utmost applause; and Garrick has writ a very excellent prologue to it in ridicule of the late sentimental comedies. Goldsmith was so kind as to offer me half a dozen tickets for the play on his night, and I intend to accept of two or three. He is going to dedicate his play to old Johnson."

While negotiations for its representation were going on, the following letters were written. The first explains the pecuniary difficulties of the unfortunate author by the tone of solicitation for its acceptance which dire necessity alone could have induced him to use; and if it causes regret for the situation of a man of genius, furnishes the true reason probably why, after the neglect and obstruction experienced on the occasion, he permitted the representation at all. The second withdraws the play from Garrick. The originals of both are without dates; but the former was probably written about the middle of January, the latter certainly early in February 1773.

"To George Colman, Esq."

"DEAR SIR,

"I entreat you'll relieve me from that state of suspense in which I have been kept for a long time. Whatever objections you have made or shall make to my play, I will endeavour to remove and not argue about them. To bring in any new judges either of its merits or faults I can never submit to. Upon a former occasion when my other play was before Mr. Garrick he offered to bring me before Mr. Whitehead's tribunal, but I refused the proposal with in-

* From a letter obligingly furnished by Wm. Brockedon Esq.

dignation: I hope I shall not experience as hard treatment from you as from him. I have as you know, a large sum of money to make up shortly; by accepting my play I can readily satisfy my creditor that way; at any rate I must look about to some certainty to be prepared. For God's sake take the play and let us make the best of it, and let me have the same measure at least which you have given as bad plays as mine.

"I am your friend and servant,

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"To David Garrick, Esq.

"DEAR SIR,

"I ask many pardons for the trouble I gave you yesterday. Upon more mature deliberation, and the advice of a sensible friend, I began to think it indelicate in me to throw upon you the odium of confirming Mr. Colman's sentence. I therefore request you will send my play back by my servant; for having been assured of having it acted at the other house, though I confess yours in every respect more to my wish, yet it would be folly in me to forego an advantage which lies in my power of appealing from Mr. Colman's opinion to the judgment of the town. I entreat if not too late, you will keep this affair a secret for some time.

"I am, dear Sir, your very humble servant,

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

When it had gained the length of a rehearsal, new difficulties awaited the author. Several alterations had been made by him at the suggestion of friends, but others of more moment now suggested by the manager were rejected as interfering with the main business of the piece; and additional offence was thus supposed to have been given him. Two of the comedians likewise (Smith and Woodward) for whom the characters of Marlow and Tony Lumpkin were intended, declined their respective parts, though their friends after the unequivocal reception of the play, found it expedient to send forth an apology for the refusal. One of them (Smith) alleged that far from disliking the part of young Marlow, none in comedy had pleased him more for several years, but the play of *Elfrida* in which he was perfect, being refused for his benefit, just then at hand, he had to study a part in *Lady Jane Grey*, and was thus unable from the shortness of the notice to undertake that which was assigned him in *She Stoops to Conquer*. The other intimated that he had been influenced by the opinion of the manager, who considered it would not reach a second representation; one of his criticisms on the play as alleged, being afterwards quoted, that "it dwindled and dwindled, and at last went out like the snuff of a candle." So essential was the aid of these two performers deemed to a favourable result, that a few friends of the Poet recommended on this account if on no other, the postponement of the performance till the ensuing season. His reply evinced the pride of an author, or no small confidence in the merit

of his comic scenes—"I should sooner that my play were damned by bad players, than merely saved by good acting."

Two others of the Covent Garden* Company were therefore substituted for those who withheld their services; but this embarrassment removed, another immediately occurred respecting the Epilogue. The first, supplied as it appears by Murphy, theatrical custom prevented from being sung as intended by Mrs. Catley; a second was then provided; and eventually no less than four were written before manager and performers could be satisfied. When we thus learn the caprice and petulance to which men of genius are subject in their intercourse with the theatre, our wonder becomes increased that any should be found to exert their talents in a sphere where they are subjected to so many and vexatious impertinences.

The measure of the mortifications of the author was not yet full. During one of the rehearsals when several ladies of his acquaintance, and among the rest Miss Reynolds, were present, a sally of Tony Lumpkin appeared of questionable propriety, and he proposed to omit out.—"Pshaw, my dear Doctor," cried Colman, "of what consequence is a squib, when we have been sitting for two hours over a barrel of gunpowder." Such a remark at such a moment was at least ungenerous, appearing to insult by sarcasm what he had endeavoured to obstruct by the possession of theatrical power; and the Poet is said not to have forgiven so offensive and ill-natured a sally of wit. By the terms however in which he is mentioned in the dedication to the published play, this would not appear to have been the case.

No name, as we have seen, had been given the comedy on the 22d February, and from the frequent remark of Johnson, "We are all in labour for a name to Goldy's play," it seems to have occasioned some perplexity. The first adopted but soon dismissed, was "The Old House a New Inn;" Reynolds proposed the "Belle's Stratagem," afterwards chosen by Mrs. Cowley for one of her comedies, which may have been deemed inappropriate from the stratagem of Miss Hardcastle not being premeditated, but the effect of the mistake of Marlow and Hastings. The present name, a suggestion of the author himself, was fixed upon only three days before the representation, and in some of the newspapers it was announced simply as "The Mistakes of a Night."

While the rehearsals were going on, he addressed the following note to Mr. Cradock, then in town—

"Mr. Goldsmith's best respects to Mr. Cradock—when he asked him to-day, he quite forgot an engagement of a week's standing, which has been made purposely for him; he feels himself quite uneasy at not being permitted to have his instructions upon those parts where he must necessarily be defective. He will have a rehearsal

* Mr. Lee Lewes, who thence by his performance was first brought into notice, and Mr. Quick.

on Monday, when if Mr. Cradock would come, and afterwards take a bit of mutton chop, it would add to his other obligations.

"Sunday morning.

"To J. Cradock, Esq. at the Hotel in Pall Mall."

To the same friend who had in the mean time returned to the country, he wrote immediately after the representation of the piece and gives an account of the trouble occasioned by the epilogues, and an intelligible intimation of discontent at the treatment he had received. Both letters are without dates.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"The play has met with a success much beyond your expectations or mine. I thank you sincerely for your epilogue, which however could not be used, but with your permission shall be printed.* The story in short is this; Murphy sent me rather the outline of an epilogue than an epilogue, which was to be sung by Mrs. Catley, and which she approved.

"Mrs. Bulkley hearing this insisted on throwing up her part, unless according to the custom of the theatre, she were permitted to speak the epilogue. In this embarrassment I thought of making a quarrelling epilogue between Catley and her, debating who should speak the epilogue, but then Mrs. Catley refused after I had taken the trouble of drawing it out. I was then at a loss indeed; an epilogue was to be made and for none but Mrs. Bulkley. I made one and Colman thought it too bad to be spoken; I was obliged therefore to try a fourth time, and I made a very mawkish thing as you'll shortly see. Such is the history of my stage adventures, and which I have at last done with. I cannot help saying that I am very sick of the stage; and though I believe I shall get three tolerable benefits, yet I shall on the whole be a loser, even in a pecuniary light; my ease and comfort I certainly lost while it was in agitation.

"I am, my dear Cradock,

"Your obliged and obedient servant,

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"P. S. Present my most humble respects to Mrs. Cradock."

Under all the disadvantages enumerated, in addition according to the general remark, of bad actors, bad dresses, and bad scenery, the triumph of the comedy in public favour was complete, as if the town had determined to approve in the strongest manner what the manager seemed disposed prematurely to condemn. Its reception as we find he confesses exceeded even the expectations of the author. The first representation took place on the 15th March, between which and the conclusion of the season, in consequence of holidays and benefits, no more than twelve nights, including three for the author,

* Mr. Cradock has the following memorandum respecting these lines:—"The Epilogue, as Dr. G. terms it, was a mere *jeu d'esprit* returned to him with the copy of his comedy, as a ludicrous address to the town by Tony Lumpkin, but not intended to be spoken; parts alluded to in it, had been even struck out by myself as too free, in the Doctor's original manuscript."

remained to the managers; these however were occupied by the new comedy, and the house closed with it on the 31st May. The author's nights, duly announced according to the custom of the time as being "For the Author," were the 18th March, and 12th and 29th of April, by which, according to a calculation of the usual expenses and receipts of the house, he received between four and five hundred pounds.*

The Duke of Gloucester, for whom in consequence of the Royal Marriage Act some public sympathy existed, was present the first night of representation, whether from previous intimation of a passage in the play, does not appear. But when Hastings uttered the speech to Miss Neville, "We'll go to France, for there even among slaves, the laws of marriage are respected," it was instantly applied to his Royal Highness by the audience, and several rounds of applause testified their feeling for his situation.

Such an incident was not likely to pass unnoticed, and might be construed into an attack by the author on what were known to be the sentiments of the King. He was too independent however to strike out the passage, although desirous, as he more than once expressed in society, that his Majesty might command his play; adding however to the wish, "not that it would do me any good;" and yet perhaps with the hope if viewed with an eye of favour, of receiving some token of royal consideration. His desire was gratified on the 5th May, the tenth night of performance, when it was commanded by the King and Queen; and again in the ensuing season (November 10th) but the honour formed all the advantages accruing from these visits. During the summer Foote acted the comedy at the Haymarket, and it was repeated at Covent Garden frequently before the following Christmas.

Few will hesitate to admit that the success of the play, although the humour may be occasionally broad and some of the situations bordering upon farce, was well deserved. The leading incident of

* Friends were not wanting to forward his views by various inducements to attend the theatre for his advantage; the following appeared the third night; it has been remarked that some advertisements announced the comedy on the first performance simply as "The Mistakes of a Night."

"The Mistakes of a Night,
Will set matters right,
As 'tis by all parties agreed;
From this lucky hit,
For once a poor wit,
May turn out a Goldsmith indeed!"

"THEATRICAL INTELLIGENCE."

"It is with great pleasure we can inform the public, that the ingenions and engaging *Miss Comedy*, is in a fair way of recovery. This much admired young lady has lately been in a very declining way, and was thought to be dying of a *sentimental consumption*. She is now under the care of *Dr. Goldsmith*, who has already prescribed twice for her. The medicines sat extremely easy upon the stomach; and she appears to be in fine spirits. The Doctor is to pay her a *third* visit this evening, and it is expected he will receive a very handsome *fee* from the lady's friends and admirers."

the plot, the mistaking a gentleman's house for an inn by a trick played off upon the credulity of travellers, is a novel contrivance, yet scarcely more improbable than the various blunders and involvements which comedy frequently exhibits; and if the fact ever occurred, of which it is said there are more instances on record than the mistake made by Goldsmith himself in travelling to school at Edgeworthstown, it is sufficient for the purposes of the dramatist. Several of the characters seem new, or nearly new to the stage. Tony Lumpkin is certainly original, and allowing for some coarseness and the usual degree of comic embellishment, not far removed from nature; young Marlow has likewise claims to novelty; and Mr. and Mrs. Hardcastle differ in several shades from the customary old country gentleman and indulgent mother, familiar to the eye of an audience. The business of the scene is active and diverting, the interest sustained throughout, and the dialogue lively from the equivocal produced by the mistake of some of the characters with regard to their position with others. The incident of the robbery is supposed to be borrowed from Albumazar.

Cumberland in his memoirs gives a minute detail of the preliminary measures of the friends of the author to support the piece. He states that they dined together at the Shakspeare Tavern, with Johnson in remarkably high spirits in the chair; near him was Goldsmith, the Burkes, Reynolds, Fitzherbert, Caleb Whitefoord, and as he tells us "a phalanx of North-British pre-determined applauders under the banners of Major Mills;" that they thence proceeded to the theatre, separated into knots with preconcerted signals when to applaud; and that he was placed as flapper or remembrancer, to Mr. Adam Drummond who he adds, was "gifted by nature with the most sonorous, and at the same time the most contagious laugh that ever echoed from the human lungs," to give him his cue, *he having himself declared that he did not know when to give his fire*; and that in this manner, with Johnson in the front row of a side box also laughing, they carried the play, and "triumphed" he goes on to say, "not only over Colman's judgment, but our own."

The greater part of this story, like that of the alleged matrimonial design of the landlady of the Poet upon him, told by the same writer, is believed to be apocryphal.* He is known to be inaccurate in his narrations, he admits even misstatements, and writing from memory at the distance of thirty years after the transaction, with few dates in his volumes, cannot be supposed to remember correctly, trifling incidents connected with his occasional associates. He avows that he knew little or nothing of Goldsmith, which is obvious from a close examination of his book, he tells no original anecdote

* In conversation lately with an eminent writer distinguished for research and accuracy, he remarked in allusion to memoir writers and without being aware of the opinion of the present writer, that many parts of Cumberland's Autobiography were little better than romance. It is painful to think this of any respectable member of the republic of letters, but it is to be feared there is too much reason for it in the present instance. Further reasons for believing the fact in reference to Goldsmith will hereafter appear.

of him, and strangely misrepresents what he had heard from others ; as in the story above alluded to, the sale of the Vicar of Wakefield, the sum received for it, and even what every one of common knowledge on literary matters knew, the name of the bookseller to whom sold.

Wherever the dinner took place, whether at the house of Sir Joshua Reynolds as Northcote told the present writer, and he is rarely incorrect, or at the Shakspeare, it consisted of but a few persons. Nor can it be conceived why a large party of *North Britons* more particularly, should assemble to support the play of one whose friends, personal or literary, were not of that nation, and whose national prejudices he had offended by frequent jokes, and by his known opinions upon Ossian. Mr. Fitzherbert, who is stated to have been one of the dinner party, had died the preceding year. The more immediate friends of the Poet really present in the theatre and noticed by the audience, were Johnson, Burke, Reynolds, Dr. Thomas Francklin connected with the Critical Review, and a few more of less note. Cumberland, Kelly, Macpherson and others were likewise visible in the boxes, the two former, according to general opinion, as rivals or enemies rather than friends, and as such were assailed in the innumerable squibs and witticisms thrown out on the occasion. Cumberland had acquired unusual notoriety for his jealousy of brother authors of whatever description ; it is therefore difficult to believe he attended as the active friend of his most formidable rival, considered in the triple character of poet, novelist, and dramatist ; and the success of whose play was loudly proclaimed in the daily journals as a triumph over the “ Kellys, Cumberlands, Kenricks, Lenoxes, Griffithses, and other sentimentalists.”*

* “ On Monday, between the hours of six and nine in the evening, Miss Sententia Horn-Book, a young lady particularly known at the theatres, was suddenly taken ill and her life is despaired of. Her friends, who during the course of her short existence, have been perpetually crying about her, will probably say on this occasion, like Laertes,

‘ Too much of water hast thou had Ophelia
And therefore I forbid my tears.’

“ This sudden calamity is said to have been brought on by the prescription of one Dr. Goldsmith, a name which we do not recollect to have met with in the list of those who destroy either with or without a license. Mr. C——d, (Cumberland,) Mr. K——y, Mrs. G——hs, Mrs. L——x, Mr. O——n, (O’Brien,) are sending every hour to inquire after her ; because when she dies, as the proverb says, they may *quake for fear*.”

On the third night of the comedy the following appeared—

“ At Dr. Goldsmith’s merry play,
All the spectators laugh, they say ;
The assertion, Sir, I must deny,
For Cumberland and Kelly cry,
Ride, si sapis.”

“ There is *no truth* in the report that the author of *The Fashionable Lover* (Cumberland) is preparing a criticism on Dr. Goldsmith’s play ; for he is well known to

The inference that Cumberland means to be drawn from the account he gives is, that success was the result of the exertions of the author's friends, not of the merits of the piece itself. The sneer with which it concludes, written at so distant a period, when the popularity of the play had long found universal favour, has something of the appearance of ill-nature; and this can scarcely be matter of surprise when we remember that its career was considered fatal to his own less comic productions;* and may be a further reason for believing that though present at the representation, it was not as the zealous supporter he describes. Goldsmith's friends no doubt attended as is usual on the first night of a new piece, willing to promote his success, or counteract unfair opposition. But such advocates can never overpower the public voice, or give currency to productions destitute of merit; a negative or silent rejection is as effectual as that which is positive; none therefore will pay to hear what they dislike, or do not approve. Should even a first night succeed by such means, the second or third will show the failure; whereas every succeeding representation of the new comedy served to raise its popularity.† To the comments of an unfriendly critic, the comic dramatist may at all times oppose the mirth of his audience; for time has confirmed the opinion which Dr. Johnson gave at the moment—"I know of no comedy for many years that has so much exhilarated

be at this time employed in writing the Epithalamium of Lady B———t L———, and Mr. Deputy F———."

* Hannah More in her correspondence points strongly at the jealous temper of Cumberland. To Wm. Gray Esq. of York she writes Aug. 14, 1809.

"I have never written, and by the grace of God I never *will* write a line in my own vindication, though Mr. Cumberland in his last Review talks of my 'suckling babes of grace,' and 'making *hell-broth*;' advises the Bishop against a book which is intended to overturn the Church; that the deepest mischiefs lurk in every page of 'Cœlebs;' and as the book is in every body's hands, he feels it his duty to say, '*Caveat Emptor*.' My dear Sir, shall I not pity the poor man on the borders of fourscore, who could write such a criticism after having written a poem called 'Calvary?' Alas! for poor human nature, that he has not forgiven, at the end of thirty years, that in my gay and youthful days a tragedy of mine was preferred to one of his which perhaps better deserved success." To Sir William Pepys in December of the same year she says—"My early foe —— (Cumberland) has kept alive all that rancour which he exerted against me thirty years ago, because 'Percy,' with perhaps less merit, had more success than the 'Battle of Hastings.'"

† Several similar accounts to the following appeared in all the daily journals:—

"The applause given to a new piece on the first evening of its representation is sometimes supposed to be the tribute of partial friendship. The approbation shown on the second exhibition of Dr. Goldsmith's new Comedy, exceeded that with which its first appearance was attended. Uninterrupted laughter or clamorous plaudits accompanied his muse to the last line of his play; and when it was given out for the Author's benefit the Theatre was filled with the loudest acclamations that ever rang within its walls."

"The vein of natural and easy humour which runs throughout Dr. Goldsmith's new Comedy, is so happily calculated to entertain all degrees of people, that a gentleman well known at the West end of the town is said to have laid a considerable wager, that in four months' time it will have been performed at all the different Theatres in Ireland and Scotland, as well as in every great town in England, to which any company of comedians belongs, and with the same degree of applause it has received at the Theatre Royal in Covent Garden."

an audience; that has answered so much the great end of comedy—making an audience merry.”

A similar idea of the true design of comedy generally, seems to have been entertained by the author himself. Inquiring of Northcote, then a pupil of Sir Joshua, to whom as we have seen he had good-naturedly given tickets for the performance on his benefit night, his opinion of its merits, the latter said he could not presume to decide upon the matter. “Did it make you laugh?” “Exceedingly,” was the reply; “Then,” continued the Poet, “that is all that I require.”

The greater indifference now shown to theatrical pieces, renders it difficult to give an adequate idea of the general exultation at the overthrow, as it was considered, of the class of sentimental comedies which had for a few years occupied the place of mirth and humour. Though fashion had upheld them for a time, sufficient good taste existed among the people to disapprove when the opportunity offered, of what were termed, “Comedies taken from the Whole Duty of Man, and Sentiments from the Book of Proverbs.” Goldsmith was loudly hailed as the champion of this reform in taste; he became the theme of conversation, the daily journals rang with his praises or ridicule of his rivals, and complimentary paragraphs and verses were showered down upon the vivacity and humour of his muse. A few of these, as proofs of the general feeling of the moment, may be quoted; one absurdly assumes the name of Johnson, though without a particle of his energy, correctness, or power, and in the concluding lines, pays rather an equivocal compliment; the fourth and best is said to have been written by Mr. Wilkes, although intimate with the manager whom he so wittily assails.*

• *Verses from Dr. Johnson to Dr. Goldsmith,*

OCCASIONED BY HIS NEW COMEDY, ENTITLED “THE MISTAKES OF A NIGHT.”

“No wonder the Vis Comica is scarce,
Bad taste had banished Comedy and Farce,
Fettered the Drama’s sons, their genius damped,
Their native, manly, sterling honour cramped;
No flights permitted as in days of yore,
’Twas dangerous alike to sink or soar.
With some pert fools who call’d themselves the Town,
Wit was a pedant, Humour was a clown;
Nor one nor t’other durst a play-wright show,
Wit was too high and Humour was too low.
The play-house bard who wanted clothes and fuel,
Must bring a piece harmless as water-gruel:
In order to secure his houses full,
Be chastely moral and genteelly dull;
And if he hoped to live his nine nights out,
Must give no Bill-of-Rights-man cause to pout;
To sentimental dialogues must keep,
Whilst the tame audience yawn, admire and weep.—
Too many tears the Comic Muse hath shed,
Too much of Sentiment in Humour’s stead;
Old saws too long have charm’d the slumbering Pit,
And musty Proverbs in default of Wit.

In proportion to the praises of the successful author, were the ridicule and odium cast upon his supposed enemies, both in prose and

"But now with joy I tell the Drama's friends,
Now a new progeny from heaven descends;
Thalia long, too long from Britain stray'd,
Appears again in all her charms array'd:
Say not that Wit and Humour now are scarce
Say not we've no new Comedy or Farce;
The arduous task a modern bard has done,
Restoring Farce and Comedy in one."

ON THE SUCCESS OF DR. GOLDSMITH'S NEW COMEDY OF "THE MISTAKES OF A NIGHT."

"Long have our comic writers tried to move,
With tales of pity and chaste scenes of love;
On stilts sublime the laughing muse they raise,
For nothing low our taste refined can please.
Nor wit nor humour such grave preachers knew,
The Maudlin-house resembles Whitfield's crew.
No bursts of laughter shook the merry Pit,
In solemn silence all attentive sit;
Till some sad story big with tragic wo,
From the touch'd Boxes cause the tear to flow.
So deep the comedy, it makes you stare,
To find no poisoned bowl or dagger there.
Gay mirth and honest joke are in disgrace,
Melpomene usurps her Sister's place:
Let sentiment but stiffen every line,
The raptured audience loudly cry, how fine!
Goldsmith at length warm in Thalia's cause,
Broke the dull charm, and rescued Nature's laws."

To Dr. Goldsmith,

ON THE SUCCESS OF HIS NEW COMEDY CALLED "SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER."

"Long has the Comic Muse, seduced to town,
Shone with false charms, in finery not her own;
And strove by affectation's flimsy arts,
And sickly sentiments to conquer hearts:
But now reclaim'd, she seeks her native plains,
Where pass'd her youth, where mirth, where pleasure reigns;
She throws each tinsel ornament aside,
And takes once more plain Nature for her guide;
With sweet simplicity she smiles again,
And *Stoops to Conquer* with her Goldsmith's pen."

To Dr. Goldsmith.

"Has then (the question pray excuse,
For Doctor you're a droll man,)
The dose that saved the Comic Muse,
Almost destroy'd poor Colman?"

"How drugs alike in strength and name,
In operations vary!
When what exalts the Doctor's fame
Undoes the Apothecary!"

verse.* Among these, besides the persons already mentioned were numbered Macpherson though no dramatist, which may of itself dis-

* “*On Mr. Hugh Kelly’s Censure of the New Comedy.*”

ADDRESSED TO DR. GOLDSMITH.

“If Kelly finds fault with the *shape* of your muse,
And thinks that too loosely it plays,
He surely dear Doctor, will never refuse
To make it a new *Pair of Stays!*”

“His *lining* is small talk pick’d up at a dance,
His *laces* are tragedy groans,
His *Tabby’s* a Novel, his *Twist* a Romance,
And sentiments serve for the *Bones!*”

* * * * *

“*To the Printer of the St. James’s Chronicle.*”

“SIR,

“Though Dr. Goldsmith’s brow has been already covered with such laurels as this grateful nation could bestow, perhaps after all he may regard a sprig of Northern bays as the greater curiosity.

“It is well known that Mr. Macpherson attended the first night’s representation of the *New Comedy*; but the public has not yet been informed, that soon after the conclusion of the piece, he was heard to utter the following sentiments, and in that peculiar style with which he has dignified his late Translation of Homer:

“—— ‘Through the sable boxes darkened the bombasins of women:—But along the mournful veil of artificial grief—quick shot the gay radiance of joy:—and kindled in every bright eye.’

“‘Dumb the sullen critic sat:—on his cankered heart feeding:—Fiercely frowning, deeply glooming.—Till at last, from lungs of poison—burst faintly a timorous hiss—Turn him out, turn him out, toss him over—was the voice of the crowd in a rage.’

“‘The *Manager* grumbled within:—The people sat laughing amain:—Through galleries, boxes, and pit—loud rattled the tumult of joy.’

“I am, Sir, with the sincerest pleasure in being able to communicate this literary curiosity to your paper, your most obedient servant,

“PHILO-FUSTIAN.”

To George Colman, Esq.,

ON THE SUCCESS OF DR. GOLDSMITH’S NEW COMEDY.

“Come, Coley, doff those mourning weeds,
Nor thus with jokes be flamm’d;
Tho’ Goldsmith’s present play succeeds,
His next may still be damn’d

As this has ’scaped without a fall,
To sink his next prepare;
New actors hire from Wapping Wall,
And dresses from Rag Fair.

For scenes let tatter’d blankets fly,
The prologue Kelly write;
Then swear again the piece must die
Before the author’s night.

prove the story of Cumberland of the play being supported by many North Britons. But Colman, as manager, was selected more especially for the object of censure. Goldsmith's cause was indeed extremely popular, but in taking it up, several of his partisans were probably revenging their own; some willing to punish the ruler of the theatre for past refusals of their pieces; others meaning to intimidate him from such offences in future. The fire of squibs, witticisms, and paragraphs against him became incessant; his opinion of the play was attributed to extreme jealousy, and if it were not jealousy it was triumphantly asked, how could any dramatic writer in future, with satisfaction to himself, offer a piece to a person so defective in judgment as Mr. Colman had shown himself, or the town receive it with pleasure at his hands? Either horn of the dilemma was thought fatal to his continuance in theatrical power. His marginal criticisms which seemed to be well known, were treated with derision; to be despised, it was said, they need only be published; and the author as the best punishment of his enemy was recommended to print them with the play, in order that the public might see on whom they depended for the selection of their chief amusement.

So perseveringly was this warfare carried on in every variety of form, that the manager became at length seriously annoyed; he wrote what was considered a penitential letter to Goldsmith requesting he would "*take him off the rack of the newspapers,*" and in order to escape the annoyance in London, took flight in the beginning of the second week to Bath. A victory was thus achieved to the great satisfaction of the wits of the day, but the author on the publication of the play gave no intimation either of triumph or discontent in the only allusion he permitted himself to make.—"The undertaking a comedy," he says, "not merely sentimental, was very dangerous; and Mr. Colman who saw this piece in its various stages always thought it so. However I ventured to trust it to the public; and though it was necessarily delayed till late in the season, I have every reason to be grateful." This moderation which indicates none of the permanent resentment attributed to him, was not without its effect. When death had removed all rivalry, the manager, weaned from his sentimental attachments, thus paid tribute to the genius and memory of his old friend, in the prologue to the *Chapter of Accidents*, 1780.

"Long has the passive stage howe'er absurd,
 Been ruled by names and governed by a word.
 Some poor cant term, like magic spells, can awe,
 And bend our realms like a dramatic law.
 When Fielding, Humour's favourite child, appear'd,
Low was the word, a word each author fear'd!
 Till cheer'd at length by Pleasantry's bright ray,
 Nature and Mirth resumed their legal sway,
 And Goldsmith's genius basked in open day."

Should these tricks fail, the lucky elf,
 To bring to lasting shame,
 E'en write *the best you can yourself*,
 And print it in *his name*."

Some imitations of the play have appeared on the French stage; among others *La Fausse Auberge* a prose comedy in two acts which came out at the Italian theatre at Paris in 1789, and experienced tolerable success.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Fracas with Evans the bookseller.—An unfinished novel.—Claims upon his charity.
—The Grumbler.—Dictionary of Arts and Sciences.—History of Greece.

THE applause bestowed upon his comic labours was too great not to draw from less successful candidates for public favour, a portion of that abuse frequently incurred by superior merit. A letter of this description appeared in the London Packet newspaper, of the 24th March,* which he would no doubt have treated with the neglect

* “*To Dr. Goldsmith;*

“*Vous vous moyez par vanité.*

“*SIR,*

“The happy knack which you have learned of puffing your own compositions provokes me to come forth. You have not been the editor of newspapers and magazines, not to discover the trick of literary *humbug*. But the gauze is so thin, that the very foolish part of the world see through it, and discover the Doctor's monkey face and cloven foot. Your poetic vanity, is as unpardonable as your personal; would man believe it, and will woman bear it, to be told, that for hours, the *great* Goldsmith will stand surveying his grotesque orang-outang figure in a pier glass. Was but the lovely H——k as much enamoured, you would not sigh, my gentle swain, in vain. But your vanity is preposterous. How will this same bard of Bedlam ring the changes in praise of Goldy! But what has he to be either proud or vain of? The Traveller is a flimsy poem, built upon false principles; principles diametrically opposite to liberty. What is the Good-natured Man, but a poor, water-gruel, dramatic dose? What is the Deserted Village, but a pretty poem, of easy numbers, without fancy, dignity, genius or fire? And pray what may be the last *speaking pantomime* so praised by the Doctor himself, but an incoherent piece of stuff, the figure of a woman, with a fish's tail, without plot, incident, or intrigue. We are made to laugh at stale, dull jokes, wherein we mistake pleasantry for wit, and grimace for humour; wherein every scene is unnatural, and inconsistent with the rules, the laws of nature, and of the drama; viz. Two gentlemen come to a man of fortune's house, eat, drink, sleep, &c. and take it for an inn. The one is intended as a lover to the daughter; he talks with her for some hours, and when he sees her again in a different dress, he treats her as a bar-girl, and swears she squinted. He abuses the master of the house, and threatens to kick him out of his own doors. The Squire whom we are told is to be a fool, proves the most sensible being of the piece; and he makes out a whole act, by bidding his mother lie close behind a bush, persuading her that his father, her own husband, is a highwayman, and that he is come to cut their throats; and to give his cousin an opportunity to go off, he drives his mother over hedges, ditches, and through ponds. There is not, sweet sucking Johnson, a natural stroke in the whole play, but the young fellow's giving the stolen jewels to the mother supposing her to be the landlady. That Mr. Colman did no justice to this piece, I honestly allow; that he told all his friends

such things deserve and which he had hitherto always shown, but for the injudicious interference of a military acquaintance, one of his countrymen, Captain Higgins, who with something of the national pugnacity, thought it necessary to involve his friend in a personal encounter in answer to this very silly and very harmless abuse.

An unfinished fragment intended for a detail of the affair, and no doubt meant for publication in lieu of that which afterwards appeared, was found among his papers in the handwriting of an amanuensis.

"As I find the public have been informed by the newspapers of a slight fray which happened between me and the editor of an evening paper; to prevent their being imposed upon, the account is shortly this.

"A friend of mine came on Friday to inform me that a paragraph was inserted against me in the London Packet which I was in honour bound to resent. I read the paper, and considered it in the same light as he did. I went to the editor and struck him with my cane on the back. A scuffle ensued * * * *."

A few new particulars of the assault upon the publisher are thus communicated by a surviving witness, whose recollection of the occurrence is but little impaired by time.*

"The circumstances attending the personal contest between Dr. Goldsmith and Evans the bookseller with whom I lived at the time, are to the best of my recollection as follow.

"A letter signed Tom Tickle appeared in the London Packet of which Evans was the publisher, reflecting on the person and literary character of Goldsmith and introducing the name of one of his female acquaintance. Instigated as it was believed by injudicious friends, he came to Paternoster Row accompanied by Captain Horneck of the Guards,† and inquiring of me whether Evans was at home, I called the latter from an adjoining room and heard Goldsmith say to him—"I have called in consequence of a scurrilous attack in your paper upon me (my name is Goldsmith) and an unwarrantable liberty taken with the name of a young lady. As for myself I care little, but her name must not be sported with." Evans declaring his ignorance of the matter, said he would speak to the editor, and stooping down for the file of the paper to look for the offensive article, the Poet struck him smartly with his cane across the

it would be damned, I positively aver; and from such ungenerous insinuations, without a dramatic merit, it rose to public notice, and it is now the *ton* to go to see it; though I never saw a person that either liked it or approved it, any more than the absurd plot of *the Homes'* tragedy of *Alonzo*. Mr. Goldsmith, correct your arrogance! Reduce your vanity; and endeavour to believe, as a man, you are of the plainest sort; and as an author, but a mortal piece of mediocrity.

Brise le miroir infidèle,
Qui vous cache la vérité.

"TOM TICKLE."

* Mr. Harris, late of St. Paul's Churchyard, whose publications for youth are so well known, and who succeeded to the business of Francis Newbery, the nephew, not the son, of John Newbery.

† Other accounts state it to have been Captain Higgins.

back. Evans who was sturdy, returned the blow with interest, when in the scuffle a lamp suspended over head was broken and the oil fell upon the combatants; one of the shopmen was sent for a constable, but in the meantime Dr. Kenrick who had been all the time in the adjoining room, and who it was pretty certain was really author of the newspaper article, came forward, separated the parties, and sent Goldsmith home in a coach.

"Captain Horneck expressed his surprise at the assault, declaring he had no previous intimation of such a design on the part of the Poet, who had merely requested that he should accompany him to Paternoster Row. Evans took steps to indict him for an assault; but subsequently a compromise took place by his assailant agreeing to pay fifty pounds to the Welsh charity."

The affair gave ample employment to the newspapers for several days. A sense of common danger, on all such occasions, unites a body which almost claims to be irresponsible not only against the law but against individuals who attempt to resent their untruths or provocations; and Goldsmith was assailed for the gross outrage, as it was called, of beating a man in his own house.* Among other things urged against him was that of having been formerly editor of a Magazine, in which he had no doubt taken as many liberties with others as had been in the present instance taken with him. To the latter part of this accusation, from which as far as can be discovered he was quite free, he however thought proper to reply in the following address, printed in the Daily Advertiser of the 31st March, 1773.

"To the Public.

"Lest it should be supposed that I have been willing to correct in others an abuse of which I have been guilty myself, I beg leave to declare, that in all my life I never wrote or dictated a single paragraph, letter, or essay in a newspaper, except a few moral essays under the character of a Chinese, about ten years ago, in the Ledger, and a letter to which I signed my name, in the St. James's Chronicle. If the liberty of the press, therefore, has been abused, I have had no hand in it.

"I have always considered the press as the protector of our freedom, as a watchful guardian, capable of uniting the weak against the encroachments of power. What concerns the public, most properly admits of a public discussion. But of late the press has turned

* Of the innumerable squibs issued on the occasion, the following is a specimen:—

"THE COMBAT.

"While the printer was busy—to give him a blow,
Unsuspecting, unguarded—how could you do so?
Such a victory gain'd will by all be agreed,
My dear Doctor, is *Sloping to Conquer* indeed!"

from defending public interest, to making inroads upon private life; from combating the strong, to overwhelming the feeble. No condition is now too obscure for its abuse, and the protector has become the tyrant of the people. In this manner the freedom of the press is beginning to sow the seeds of its own dissolution; the great must oppose it from principle, and the weak from fear; till at last every rank of mankind shall be found to give up its benefits, content with security from insults.

“How to put a stop to this licentiousness by which all are indiscriminately abused, and by which vice consequently escapes in the general censure, I am unable to tell; all I could wish is that, as the law gives us no protection against the injury, so it should give calumniators no shelter after having provoked correction. The insults which we receive before the public, by being more open are the more distressing; by treating them with silent contempt, we do not pay a sufficient deference to the opinion of the world. By recurring to legal redress we too often expose the weakness of the law, which only serves to increase our mortification by failing to relieve us. In short, every man should singly consider himself as the guardian of the liberty of the press, and as far as his influence can extend, should endeavour to prevent its licentiousness becoming at last the grave of its freedom.

“OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”

One of the jests played off upon him on this occasion was a story, that having proceeded after the engagement with injured eyes and bandaged face to his friend Dr. Johnson, complaining of the insolence and slanders of anonymous writers in the newspapers, the latter is made to reply, though with a very humble imitation of his sarcastic wit, that if he (Dr. Johnson) had attempted to resent all the slanders vented against him through such channels, he would have had by that time neither eyes to see, nor jaws to eat with. This alleged conversation some of his friends deemed it necessary to meet by a formal contradiction. What Johnson really thought and said on this occasion is told by Boswell.

“On Saturday April 3d, the day after my arrival in London this year, I went to his (Dr. Johnson’s) house late in the evening and sat with Mrs. Williams till he came home. I found in the London Chronicle Dr. Goldsmith’s apology to the public for beating Evans the bookseller, on account of a paragraph in a newspaper published by him, which Goldsmith thought impertinent to him and to a lady of his acquaintance.

“The apology was written so much in Dr. Johnson’s manner that both Mrs. Williams and I supposed it to be his; but when he came home he soon undeceived us. When he said to Mrs. Williams, ‘Well, Dr. Goldsmith’s *manifesto* has got into your paper;’ I asked him if Dr. Goldsmith had written it, with an air that made him see I suspected it was his, though subscribed by Dr. Goldsmith.

“JOHNSON. ‘Sir, Dr. Goldsmith would no more have asked me to have wrote such a thing as that for him, than he would have asked

me to feed him with a spoon, or do any thing else that denoted his imbecility. I as much believe that he wrote it as if I had seen him do it. Sir, had he shown it to any one friend he would not have been allowed to publish it. He has indeed done it very well, but it is a foolish thing well done. I suppose he has been so much elated with the success of his new comedy, that he has thought every thing that concerned him must be of importance to the public."

In the press, the play was as successful as on the stage, not less, it is said, than six thousand copies having been sold during this and the ensuing season. It was dedicated to Dr. Johnson, as much from sincere esteem as in return for the good opinion first formed by him of the piece, and his zealous endeavours to carry it forward to representation: "I have particularly reason," he says, "to thank you for your partiality to this performance." The terms otherwise used on this occasion form a compliment of the most flattering kind. "By inscribing this slight performance to you I do not mean so much to compliment you as myself. It may do me some honour to inform the public that I have lived many years in intimacy with you. It may serve the interests of mankind also to inform them that the greatest wit may be found in a character, without impairing the most unaffected piety."

The copy-right passed into the hands of Mr. Francis Newbery, who had published the *Vicar of Wakefield*. An anecdote connected with its transfer is thus in substance stated by the same gentleman, whose account of the quarrel has just been given, and who had abundant opportunities of knowing the fact.

Being pressed by pecuniary difficulties in 1771—1772, Goldsmith had at various periods obtained the advance of two or three hundred pounds from Newbery under the engagement of writing a novel, which after the success of the *Vicar of Wakefield* promised to be one of the most popular speculations. Considerable delay took place in the execution of this undertaking, and when at length submitted to the perusal of the bookseller, it proved to be in great measure the plot of the comedy of the *Good-natured Man*, turned into a tale. Objections being taken to this, the manuscript was returned. Goldsmith declared himself unable or unwilling to write another, but in liquidation of the debt now pressingly demanded, said he should require time to look round for means of raising the money, unless Mr. Newbery chose to take the chance of a play coming forward at Covent Garden. "And yet to tell you the truth, Frank," added the candid poet in making the proposal, "there are great doubts of its success." Newbery accepted the offer, doubtful of being otherwise repaid, and the popularity of "*She Stoops to Conquer*," gained, according to the recollection of the narrator, above three hundred pounds more than the sum advanced to the author.

This novel thus mentioned as rejected he afterwards read in the family of Mr. Bunbury, and by one of the ladies then present, is very well remembered as being taken from the comedy, though the impression remains that it was unfinished. What became of the manuscript, or the name given to it, is unknown. This uncertainty

warrants perhaps a conjecture in the absence of more positive information. In the "Omniana" of Mr. Southey we find the following notice:—"A fraud has been practised in France upon Goldsmith's reputation. At the end of a volume which bears date 1774, is the following title in a list of new books, *Histoire de François Wills, ou le Triomphe de la Bienfaisance, par l'auteur du Ministre de Wakefield. Traduction de l'Anglais.*"

It is just possible that this may be the novel of which we are told; and that the author considering it too indifferent to acknowledge, or more probably leaving it incomplete, the conclusion may have been added by another hand, and the facts by some means communicated after his death to the French translator. The original, if it was ever really published in England, will no doubt furnish traces of his pen; and the similarity of title is at least remarkable.

Among the claims upon his charity, those from poor and obscure authors were perhaps least to be resisted, as much from sympathy with all the sons of misfortune, as from painful remembrance of his former struggles for existence. Of these applications, often dexterously timed, when by the success of a new play or publication his purse was believed to be replenished, and when the more to ensure success a little praise or flattery of his talents was thrown in, the following is a sufficient specimen. It is from a poor man whose name appears as author of a few indifferent fables in verse; "The Mastiff in Prison," "The Death of the Fox," with others in allusion to the political events of the day, and printed in the newspapers.

"On Dr. Goldsmith's Comedy,

'SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER.'

"Quite sick in her bed Thalia was laid,
A sentiment puke had quite killed the sweet maid,
Her bright eyes had lost all their fire;
When a regular Doctor, one Goldsmith by name,
Found out her disorder as soon as he came,
And has made her (for ever 'twill crown all his fame)
As lovely as one can desire.

Oh! Doctor, assist a poor bard who lies ill,
Without e'en a nurse, e'er a potion or pill;
From your kindness he hopes for some ease.
You're a good-natured man all the world does allow,
O would your good-nature but shine forth just now
In a manner, I'm sure your good sense will tell how,
Your servant most humbly 'twould please.

"The bearer is the author's wife; and an answer from Dr. Goldsmith by her, will be ever gratefully acknowledged by his

"Humble servant,
JOHN OAKMAN.

"Orange Court, Swallow Street,
Carnaby Market.

"Saturday, March 27, 1773."

Dr. Rowley a physician of eminence, in habits of intimacy with

him, related an instance of generosity bordering on imprudence to which he was witness.

Having waited upon the Poet with a small sum of money raised for the purpose of rescuing him from momentary embarrassment, one of his countrymen was admitted during their conversation, and related a tale of woe calculated to work on the feelings of Goldsmith. His sensibility, tremblingly alive to such appeals, knew no restraint from prudence, and snatching up no inconsiderable part of what had been brought for the relief of his own necessities, put it into the hands of the applicant and dismissed him.

Such solicitations appear never to have been made in vain however great the inconvenience to himself, so that his sensitiveness to distress became at times almost morbid. He has been known to quit his bed at night and even when labouring under indisposition, in order to relieve the miserable; and when money was scarce, or to be procured with difficulty by borrowing, he has nevertheless shared it with such as presented any claim to charity. The effect of such calls upon one of his nervous temperament, may be judged by another anecdote, which to those not aware of his peculiarities would have looked like affectation.

While playing whist at the house of Sir William Chambers in Berners Street, the party at the table consisting, besides Sir William, of Lady Chambers, Baretti, and Goldsmith, the latter hastily threw down his cards at a critical point of the game, flew out of the room, and as appeared by the opening of the door, into the street, returning speedily and resuming his seat. Sir William conceiving that something unusual had occurred ventured after the lapse of a few minutes, to inquire the cause of his sudden retreat, trusting it had not been occasioned by the heat of the room. "Not at all," was the reply, "but in truth I could not bear to hear that unfortunate woman in the street half singing, half sobbing, for such tones could only arise from the extremity of distress; her voice grated painfully on my ear and jarred my frame, so that I could not rest until I had sent her away." On farther explanation it appeared that others had likewise noticed a female voice of peculiar character aiming to sing, but without remarking that mingled tone of misery conveyed to the mind of the Poet, and which he had quitted the room to relieve.

He was content likewise to be made the channel of conveyance for the bounty of others, as we find by the following letter of General Oglethorpe, a distinguished and amiable man, at whose table he met such good society and spent many agreeable hours, and who now at an advanced period of life displayed the same love for the good of mankind in a private way, that he had previously exerted on a more extended scale. After being educated at Oxford, he had served under Prince Eugene against the Turks and was afterwards employed to found the colony of Georgia; in this duty he had gained a species of immortality from the praise of Pope—

“ Or, driven by strong benevolence of soul,
Shall fly like Oglethorpe from Pole to Pole.”

In the rebellion of 1745 he held a command under the Duke of Cumberland, but for some alleged neglect, though acquitted by a court martial, continued afterwards unemployed. He sat in parliament for many years, preserved a taste for literature, and the society of literary and distinguished men, had been a patron of Johnson's poem of “London” when the writer was unknown to him, was hospitable, generous and friendly. He survived Goldsmith about ten years, dying at the age of eighty-seven. An active interest by the Poet in the institution of a charitable society, seems to have produced this communication.

“ *From General Oglethorpe.*

“ How just, Sir, were your observations, that the poorest objects were by extreme poverty deprived of the benefit of hospitals erected for the relief of the poorest.

“ Extreme poverty which should be the strongest recommendation to charity, is here the insurmountable objection, which leaves the distressed to perish.

“ The qualifying such objects to receive the benefit of hospitals answers the intentions of the intended society. The design is the immediate relief from perishing; thereby giving time and protection to get proper destinations. And this being admitted into a hospital is a proper destination.

“ You were so good as to offer to distribute such sums as should be sent to you.

“ At the same time that I am to return you thanks for your charitable offer, I am to send you five pounds to distribute for that purpose in the time and manner you think proper. Which I accordingly herewith send.

“ You have seen, I suppose, in the St. James's Evening Post, from September 22d to 25th, the Zoilus that attacked you treated with proper contempt.

“ If a farm and a mere country scene will be a little refreshment from the smoke of London, we shall be glad of the happiness of seeing you at Cranham Hall. It is sixteen miles from the Three Nuns at Whitechapel, where Prior our stage coach (man) inns. He sets out at two in the afternoon.

“ I am, Sir,

“ Your obedient humble servant,

“ J. OGLETHORPE.

“ Cranham Hall,
(By Gray's bag) Essex.”
[No Date.]

His opinion of manuscript works being often requested by literary friends, an approval and letter of recommendation from him was esteemed an advantageous introduction to a bookseller. The following

is one of these. The work mentioned was "The History of the Revolutions of Denmark, with an account of the Present State of that Kingdom and People. By John Andrews, LL. D."

It consisted of two volumes, a creditable and now scarce, though perhaps never a popular performance, got up to satisfy public curiosity when general attention was drawn to that country by the unhappy circumstances in which Queen Matilda had been involved. It is deficient in the interest and the elegance which Goldsmith imparted to his narratives; neither is it broken into chapters, which contributes so materially to relieve the fatigue of casual or careless readers, and fix attention more thoroughly on epochs, persons, and circumstances. The letter was addressed to Mr. Nourse, the bookseller, and as appears with effect, as he became the publisher in the spring of the following year. It is without date but endorsed April 26th 1773.

"SIR,

"The bearer is Doctor Andrews who has just finished a work relative to Denmark, which I have seen and read with great pleasure. He is of opinion that a short letter of this kind, expressing my approbation, will be a proper introduction to you. I therefore once more recommend it in the warmest manner, and unless I am mistaken it will be a great credit to him as well as benefit to the purchaser of the copy.

"I am, Sir,

"Your most obedient servant,

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

Gratitude for the exertions of the actor* who personated Tony Lumpkin in his last comedy induced him to consent to alter an old play into a farce for his benefit, having on a former occasion made a pecuniary present to the representative of Croaker† in the Good-natured Man. The piece so chosen was "The Grumbler;" a translation by Sir Charles Sedley of "Le Grondeur," a comedy in three acts by Brueys. Little variation from the original appears in the English version, the characters being all preserved, but Goldsmith gives them English names as follow, and compresses the three acts into one.

The Dramatis Personæ are,

SOURBY, the Grumbler	-	-	-	(Mr. Quick.)
OCTAVIO, his son	-	-	-	(Mr. Davis.)
WENTWORTH, brother-in-law to Sourby	-	-	-	(Mr. Owenson.)
DANCING MASTER, called Signor Capriole in the	}	-	-	(Mr. King.)
Bills				
SCAMPER, servant	-	-	-	(Mr. Saunders.)
CLARISSA, in love with Octavio	-	-	-	(Miss Helme.)
JENNY, her maid	-	-	-	(Miss Pearce.)

* Mr. Quick.

† Mr. Shuter.

The plot is sufficiently simple. Sourby, an ill-tempered, discontented man as his name implies, is the torment of his family, neighbours, and servants, with none of whom can he live on tolerable terms. In the opening of the piece his son is on the point of being married to Clarissa, the consent of Sourby being chiefly obtained by the lady who believes he has a design upon her himself, relinquishing her naturally mild character for that of a termagant towards the domestics. The character thus assumed agrees however so well with his own, that in defiance of previous arrangements and promises he determines to marry her himself, a design favoured by her fortune being in his power.

No other remedy occurs to the lovers to avoid his tyranny than further deception; she therefore assumes a new character, that of an extravagant, giddy woman of fashion, who in addition to various modes of expense and pleasure, is determined to have as she tells him, "habits, feasts, fiddles, hautboys, masquerades, concerts, and especially a ball for fifteen days after their nuptials." Above all, her intended husband must learn to dance; she will admit of no excuse on the plea of years and becoming gravity. In a change of scene the dancing master arrives; Sourby as soon as he knows his errand, orders him off and threatens chastisement, but the former having his cue, declares he has positive orders from Clarissa to make him dance, and drawing his sword compels him to do so by force. In the midst of this scene Wentworth arrives, and Sourby in a fit of rage with his intended bride for placing him in a situation so unfitted to his years and disposition, renounces her for ever, to the great satisfaction of the lovers who are consequently rendered happy.

The marks of haste in adaptation are obvious; the plot wants sufficient interest, the dialogue point, and excepting Sourby we find little attempt at character; even he is rather overcharged and unnatural, but there is an effective scene or two for the comic powers of the actor.

It was represented on the 8th of May 1773,* and though announced the previous day and afterwards, as being adapted to the English stage by the successful author of "*She Stoops to Conquer*," was not repeated. As it has never been printed nor is likely to be, a scene from the MS. copy now in the possession of Thomas Amyot, Esq., will be given in another place for the satisfaction of the reader.

Among the literary projects that had taken strong hold upon his mind, was one of a popular "*Dictionary of Arts and Sciences*." This he hoped to write into notice, if not by the extent of his information at least by the graces of his style. Yet the means of acquiring the best information from popular writers were not to be neglected. With this view he had engaged several distinguished friends to write articles on the subjects with which they were believed

* In the *Journal of Boswell* of this year, he has made a mistake in the day of the month.—"On Sunday, 8th May, I dined with Johnson," &c.; whereas the 8th May was Saturday, on which night the *Grumbler* came out at Covent Garden. Neither does he allude to Goldsmith's connexion with the piece, although it was so announced in the newspapers.

to be best acquainted; other assistance was to be procured from persons of acknowledged merit; and the influence of his own name as editor, would he believed give popularity to the undertaking, forgetting that in a work necessarily embracing much of science, he had made no secret of avowing that he possessed "a taste rather classical than scientific."

In aid of this design, Dr. Johnson assented to contribute the article on ethics, and would no doubt have added others. Burke had also made liberal promises, among which it was said according to Malone, were to be an abstract of his Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful, a paper on the Philosophy of Bishop Berkeley, and no doubt others on political science. Sir Joshua chose his own profession; and a paper from him on painting, however much he had already told in his lectures, must have commanded attention. Garrick had nearly untrodden ground to go over in teaching, or telling, as much of his own art as can be communicated by writing, and which from admitted skill, experience, and literary talents, he could have rendered amusing, if not instructive, to the general reader. Dr. Burney's contribution was likewise to be professional, and the article "Musician" was actually drawn up for the work; he appears to have been personally unknown to Goldsmith, but being applied to by Garrick, agreed to give the benefit of his knowledge to one with whose fame and friends he was well acquainted. The article is supposed to have been sent to the editor,* for though some reference to it exists in Dr. Burney's papers, the piece itself is not to be found. In reply to an intimation from Garrick of the promised aid from this quarter, Goldsmith wrote the following letter:—

"To David Garrick, Esq.

Temple, June 10th, 1773.

"DEAR SIR,

"To be thought of by you obliges me; to be served by you is still more. It makes me very happy to find that Dr. Burney thinks my scheme of a dictionary useful; still more that he will be so kind as to adorn it with any thing of his own. I beg you will also accept my gratitude for procuring me so valuable an acquisition.

"I am, dear Sir,

"Your most affectionate servant,

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

To introduce this project in the best manner to public notice, he drew up a *Prospectus*, with that perspicuity and elegance by which such papers from his pen were always distinguished, though unfortunately it has not been preserved. Bishop Percy praised it as being of uncommon merit, and took some pains through Malone and others, as appears in his MS. correspondence, to recover it by inquiries of

* So the writer was informed by Madame D'Arblay, in a very agreeable interview she did him the honour to grant in August 1831.

Mr. Bott who was supposed to hold his chief papers, though in vain. Boswell also in a letter to that prelate in 1790,* seems to doubt whether it was saved from oblivion. Neither has the present writer been more fortunate, notwithstanding long and diligent inquiry wherever it was likely to be found, though it may not be irrecoverably lost. But the address and eloquence of its author proved unavailing. The booksellers hesitating to second his views, and their aid being essential to the design, no material progress was made in it. The time necessarily required for its completion, the capital to be expended, the system and arrangement to be adopted, all probably appeared to them to require an editor of more regular habits of business than he was considered to possess. Genius in such a work they probably thought less a merit than an incumbrance; while industry and knowledge, method and punctuality, were indispensable to success.

The coldness shown towards a scheme on which he had expended much thought, and some labour, and which promised to prove a source of permanent income, at least for a few years to come, occasioned him considerable vexation, and tended no doubt to that depression of spirits frequently affecting the latter part of his life. Had he lived, probably something of the kind would have been attempted; by its failure we have at least lost some papers which from the talents to be employed upon them could not have been without value.

Encouraged by the success attending the Roman and English histories, he had in the preceding year commenced that of Greece on the same abbreviated plan. When one subject wearied him another was always at hand to be taken up, and the readiness with which he turned his mind to each, gives us an idea of his facility. One volume of the work was now completed, but on the plea of that urgent necessity so often pleaded, and from whatever causes so often felt, Griffin as the agent of other booksellers paid him the copy money in June for both volumes.

Doubts however have been started whether he really had any hand in it, although the whole was printed off at the period of his death, and published about two months afterwards; for these suspicions there was no just cause. Bishop Percy not aware of his labours in this field, and probably not having read the work, felt disposed to hesitate in believing it his, but several other friends knew how he was employed and saw portions of the manuscript. The following receipt in his own handwriting for the consideration agreed upon, is still extant. But without this testimony, the internal evidence affords to any one familiar with his manner, sufficient proof of its origin. The same merits and defects, the same occasional peculiarity of phrase,† identity of sentiment, elegance of style, and

* April 9.—“Pray who is it that has the charge of Goldsmith’s Works here? I should like to talk with him. I know not where the plan of his *Encyclopædia* is, or if it be preserved.”—*Mr. Mason’s MS. Collection.*

† Several of these were it necessary to descend to detail, might be pointed out. Thus the word *strike* is used two or three times in an unusual sense. In the *Deserted Village* we find—

clearness of narration, mark this as forcibly as any of his writings, while its ease will cheat us into the belief until the trial be made, that we could tell the same story equally well.

"June 22, 1773."

"Received two hundred and fifty pounds for writing and compiling the History of Greece from Mr. William Griffin for which I promise further assignment on demand.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

The introductory remarks, not less just than admirably stated, discover the writer, for they reiterate thoughts previously advanced in one of his Essays, and transplanted into the Citizen of the World, when published in volumes. The concluding figure had been used in the Life of Parnell. "The fabulous age therefore of Greece must have no place in history; it is now too late to separate those parts which may have a real foundation in nature, from those which we owe to folly and the imagination. There are no traces left to guide us in that intricate pursuit; *the dews of the morning are past, and it is vain to attempt continuing the chase in meridian splendour.*"

This work is rather more elementary than that of Rome, and considerably more so than that of England, about six hundred and eighty very moderate sized octavo pages being devoted to it up to the death of Alexander. For an elementary work this is perhaps enough. Exclusive of the mass of admitted fable in which its earlier history is involved, the improbability of many of the details of more recent date which juvenile credulity is accustomed to believe, and courtesy has permitted to assume the name of history, are utterly beyond the pale of rational belief. Nay, many of the supposed deeds of heroism, the asserted self-denials, the reputed wisdom, the impossible virtue, the institution of and submission to revolting and impracticable laws, the battles where a few hundred are made to contend with and overcome on all occasions thousands and tens of thousands of enemies, the merits of every description assumed by the Greeks, but never yet seen in any community of men where we had the testimony of strangers to corroborate their own pretensions, exhibit that strong tinge of oriental exaggeration with which local position made them familiar. Much of what we are thus told, is contrary to the

"Unfit in these degenerate times of shame
To catch the heart and *strike* for honest fame."

In Grecian History, vol i. p. 166.—

"Some skirmishing between the Persian cavalry and the wing of the Grecian army, in which the latter were successful, seemed to give a presage of future victory, which however for ten days neither side seemed willing to *strike* for."

In the Vicar of Wakefield George Primrose's literary acquaintance means to "*strike* for a subscription."

* From the Collection of William Upcott Esq. The work was published June 15, 1774.

history of man, and therefore contrary to truth; much is owing to their being almost solely their own historians; much to national characteristics as a vain, versatile, boastful people, desirous of claiming kindred qualities with the divinities they worshipped. "Man, plain historical man," in the language of Goldsmith, "seems to have no share in the picture." From this cause perhaps and the limits within which he was necessarily confined, he has entered less at large into their civil than military annals.*

An anecdote connected with this history, communicated by a gentleman of much literary research† who believes his authority to be good, is at least amusing. It may detract something from its authenticity to remember, that the historian whose name is used on the occasion, did not appear as such publicly till after the death of Goldsmith, though the peculiar nature of the pursuits in which he was engaged may have been known among his literary acquaintance.

While engaged at his desk in composing the concluding portion of the work, Gibbon called upon him in the Temple, when after the usual preliminary salutations the Poet observed—"You are the very person of all others I wish to see. I am writing a History of Greece, and have been taxing my recollection in vain for the name of that Indian King who gave Alexander so much trouble." Gibbon amused at his perplexity and inclined to jest with it, or to punish his indolence in not referring to authorities, replied with an inward chuckle, "Oh, I can settle that point in a moment; it was Montezuma." "You are right, no doubt," said the absent Poet after a moment's hesitation, as if he nevertheless entertained some doubt, and wrote it down. Gibbon however believing that the jest might actually go forth in sober earnest, would not permit it to stand, but seemingly recollecting himself, exclaimed after a short pause, "Oh no, I mistake; I meant to say Porus, not Montezuma."

The carelessness implied by the story receives countenance from what occurred on another occasion, regarding a book and a writer now equally forgotten; yet the labours of the Poet considered, we may find some apology for his negligence in the almost unceasing nature of his drudgery.

Among the necessitous authors who resorted to his chambers for advice or pecuniary assistance, was one who had proved rather a frequent and troublesome visiter. Tired at length of solicitations, or having nothing with which to silence them, he recommended personal exertion as the surest method of obtaining relief, and set his petitioner down to draw up a description of China, with details of the manners of the people, for which a bookseller had proposed to him a sum too inadequate to be induced to take much trouble with it himself. When completed and sent to the printer without his having looked over the manuscript, he was astonished on its coming from

* A French translation of the History of Greece, by M. P. F. Aubin, appeared in 1802.

† Dawson Turner, Esq.

the press, to find the Emperor of China made a Mahometan, and India supposed to stand between China and Japan. A few sheets were obliged to be cancelled at his expense, but the event afforded an opportunity of dismissing his new ally with disgrace.

An instance of what at first view seems more reprehensible than mere carelessness in treating such books as he possessed, is related by Sir John Hawkins.

"While I was writing the History of Music," says that gentleman, "he, at the club, communicated to me some curious matter; I desired he would reduce it to writing; he promised me he would, and desired to see me at his chambers: I called on him there; he stepped into a closet and tore out of a printed book six leaves that contained what he had mentioned to me."

The fact here stated is probably true, at least the locality is correctly given, as the closet to which allusion is made formed a central apartment between his principal rooms; but the colouring intended to be given to it partakes of the severity of judgment in which that writer was too prone to indulge.* The book thus spoliated is not named, which Sir John could have done, as readily as inform us of the specific number of leaves taken out, had it suited his design so to do; and we are therefore unable to judge of the real extent of the supposed crime of the offender. For it must be remembered that as a professed compiler on many subjects, he purchased books often of little value in order to pull to pieces for immediate objects, or to save the trouble of transcription, and these, when the purpose was served, were no longer of use. We may therefore as justly believe that the book was of little or no value, an old magazine for instance, as the reverse.

Truth however requires that all his alleged offences originating in indolence or negligence should be stated without reserve; the following instance comes from another acquaintance, and having also been mentioned by Bishop Percy in conversation, is, if it can really form a charge against him, true.

"I particularly remember that when Goldsmith was near completing his Natural History, he sent to Dr. Percy and me to state, that he wished not to return to town from Windsor for I think a fortnight, if we would only complete a proof that lay on his table in the Temple. It was concerning birds, and many books lay open that he had occasionally consulted for his own materials. We met by appointment, and Dr. Percy smilingly said, 'Do you know any thing about birds?' 'Not an atom,' was my reply, 'do you?' 'Not I,' said he; 'I scarcely know a goose from a swan; however let us try what we can do.' We set to work and our task was not very difficult. Some time after the work appeared we compared notes, but could not either of us recognise his own share.†

* Sir John Hawkins seems to have been, from whatever cause, probably an unhappy temper, extremely unpopular. In the St. James's Chronicle for 1773, and in other years, are several open attacks upon his "dire malevolence," "hatred of all mankind," spirit of "dark revenge," and "harsh discord of mind."

† Mr. Cradock, in his memoirs.—Yet even by this anecdote it appears that Goldsmith afterwards altered or threw out what his friends supplied.

This excursion to Windsor was undertaken in company with some ladies, one of whom had written some pieces under the signature of Melissa, and likewise Mr. Purefoy, whose name has appeared in a preceding page, and who afterwards communicated some of the particulars to the late Mr. Pennick of the British Museum. It was literally by the account given by that gentleman, a party of pleasure, where enjoyment was pursued with no ordinary zest.

A second edition of the History of England being likely to be called for soon, he was now occupied in the revision of the first; the error of making Naseby situated in Yorkshire was still overlooked. The following notes written about this time relate to his employment; it may be necessary to notice in explanation of their being addressed to Mr. Cadell, that Davies having sold part of his interest in the work, the former had become the purchaser.

“Doctor Goldsmith’s compliments to Mr. Cadell, and desires a set of the History of England for correction, if interleaved the better.”

“Mr. Goldsmith’s compliments to Mr. Cadell, begs for an hour or two the use of Millot’s History by Mrs. Brooke.

“Mr. Cadell, Strand.”

At what period the following letter was written does not appear, being without date, but probably about this time when exulting at the success of his last play. Another similar production as we see, in which it is doubtful whether he had made any progress, is held up to Garrick in prospect, who would appear by the proposed draught upon him to have been made occasionally available in pecuniary advances. The reference to Newbery appears to relate also to money transactions which had been productive of disagreement.

“To David Garrick, Esq.”

“MY DEAR FRIEND,

“I THANK you! I wish I could do something to serve you. I shall have a comedy for you in a season or two at farthest that I believe will be worth your acceptance, for I fancy I will make it a fine thing. You shall have the refusal. I wish you would not take up Newbery’s note but let Waller tease him, without however coming to extremities; let him haggle after him and he will get it. I will draw upon you one month after date for sixty pounds and your acceptance will be ready money, part of which I want to go down to Barton with. May God preserve my honest little man, for he has my heart.

“Ever

“OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”*

To one of his visits to a favourite resort with Sir Joshua Reynolds, the following allusion occurs in a letter of Mr. Thomas Fitzmaurice,

* In the collection of William Upcott, Esq.

a relative of a noble Irish family, addressed to Garrick, dated August 4, 1773.*

"I shall dine at Twickenham to-morrow, and if I should not hear from you to the contrary, I shall set out from thence towards Hampton in my phaeton on Friday morning at nine o'clock; and if I should meet you or her Majesty† on the Common shall be happy to take up one or both in my vehicle, or shall be glad to descend and accompany you on foot to Hampton. *I am just going with Sir Joshua and Doctor Goldsmith to Vauxhall*, which will be my first exit from home this day. I don't find myself the better for my confinement of late. My best compliments, &c. &c. attend the best of Queens and her companion, my favourite Mrs. Flasby.

"Yours most sincerely and affectionately, &c.

"THOMAS FITZMAURICE."

CHAPTER XXIV.

Embarrassments.—Table Talk.—His Conversation.—Wit.

IMPRUDENCE in the management of his pecuniary concerns, produced at this time its frequent result, serious uneasiness of mind. To disappointment in the project of the Dictionary, was added failure by a few of his friends in efforts made to secure some provision for him from Government; he found difficulty in raising further supplies, and as a necessary consequence, of repaying sums already borrowed; while the calls of publishers compelled him to labour upon works for which the remuneration had been received and spent. His spirits became depressed, his health impaired, and short starts of irritability to which he had been occasionally subject, increased; a jest would disconcert him, and he was seen to take offence in mixed societies from trifling causes.

As none of his acquaintance were informed of the extent of these embarrassments, they understood not certain inconsistencies, or as they were termed, absurdities, in his behaviour, assumed no doubt often to throw off unpleasant recollections. From seeming absence or gravity, he would fly to the extremes of mirth and jollity; and from silence, would commence talking incessantly and inconsiderately on all subjects; just as he was formerly seen, when by his own account nearly suffocating with vexation at the reception of his play, singing a song of "an old woman tossed in a blanket seventeen times as high as the moon." Unwilling to be suspected of wishing to tax the generosity of his friends, or too proud to seem as poor as he really was, a few only suspected his situation; to these he exhibited the assumed gayety of despair.

* In the collection of William Upcott, Esq.

† Mrs. Garrick.

About this period one of those friends with whom there existed much mutual esteem* saw him in London, and in his *Recollections* has given some particulars which from corroborating circumstances are no doubt substantially true. He had come to town out of the usual season for country visiters, in order to place his lady under the care of a popular dentist, and took lodgings in the vicinity of the Temple. With him the poet seems to have used no disguise, and the relation is not without interest.

"Goldsmith," writes this gentleman, "I found much altered and at times very low; and I devoted almost all my mornings to his immediate service. He wished me to look over and revise some of his works; but with a select friend or two, I was pressing that he should publish by subscription his two celebrated poems of the 'Traveller' and the 'Deserted Village' with notes; for he was well aware that I was no stranger to Johnson's having made some little addition to the one, and possibly had suggested some corrections at least for the other; but the real meaning was to give some great persons an opportunity of conveying pecuniary relief of which the Doctor at that time was particularly in need. Goldsmith readily gave up to me his private copies and said, 'Pray do what you please with them.' But whilst he sat near me he rather submitted to, than encouraged my zealous proceedings.

"I one morning called upon him however and found him infinitely better than I expected, and in a kind of exulting style he exclaimed, 'Here are some of my best prose writings; I have been hard at work since midnight and I desire you to examine them.' 'These,' said I, 'are excellent indeed.' 'They are,' he replied, 'intended as an introduction to a body of arts and sciences.'

* * * *

"The day before I was to set out for Leicestershire I insisted upon his dining with us. He replied 'I will, but on one condition that you will not ask me to eat any thing.' 'Nay,' said I, 'this answer is absolutely unkind, for I had hoped as we are supplied from the Crown and Anchor that you would have named something you might have relished.' 'Well,' was the reply, if you will but explain it to Mrs. Cradock I will certainly wait upon you.'

"The Doctor found as usual at my apartments newspapers and pamphlets, and with a pen and ink he amused himself as well as he could. I had ordered from the tavern some fish, a roasted joint of lamb, and a tart; and the Doctor either sat down or walked about just as he pleased. After dinner he took some wine with biscuits, but I was obliged soon to leave him for a while, as I had matters to settle for my next day's journey. On my return coffee was ready, and the Doctor appeared more cheerful (for Mrs. Cradock was always rather a favourite with him) and in the course of the evening he endeavoured to talk and remark as usual, but all was force. He stayed till midnight, and I insisted on seeing him safe home, and we most cordially shook hands at the Temple gate. He did not live

* The late Joseph Cradock, Esq.

long after our return into Leicestershire; and I have often since regretted that I did not remain longer in town at every inconvenience."

Besides the literary societies of London, he was occasionally known to mingle in circles of higher rank and pretension, though like Johnson, this was a sphere he neither much sought nor enjoyed. He probably found it, as most men of observation find it, without heart or cordiality. Fashionable society, although sought after by such as know it not, is very far from being the best society in London; it is too frequently parade without pleasure, the forms of intercourse without its substance; where little sincerity is found, and few friendships are formed; and where slight differences in rank become a bar to that intercourse which best exercises the understanding. At Lansdowne House* as the writer has been informed, at the house of Lord Clare, of Lord Charlemont when he was in London, of Beauclerk, Burke, Langton, General Oglethorpe, Garrick and others, as well as previously at that of Mrs. Montagu, he had an opportunity of forming an extensive acquaintance, but found that his acknowledged talents and celebrity did not always ensure notice from men of distinguished rank, though he was unreserved enough to avow his sense of being overlooked.

"Goldsmith in his diverting simplicity," writes Boswell, "complained one day in a mixed company of Lord Camden. "I met him," said he, "at Lord Clare's house in the country, and he took no more notice of me than if I had been an ordinary man." The company having laughed heartily, Johnson stood forth in defence of his friend. "Nay, gentlemen, Dr. Goldsmith is in the right. A nobleman ought to have made up to such a man as Goldsmith; and I think it is much against Lord Camden that he neglected him."

The feelings of Goldsmith and of Johnson on this assumed—for it can scarcely have been otherwise than assumed—distance, or indifference of one who had been himself but recently raised to the peerage, are not unreasonable. It is right that rank should notice and encourage talent, and that talent in return be taught to respect rank; this mutual feeling cannot arise unless there be that degree of intercourse necessary to create it, and rank therefore having the power so to do, should make those advances without which intimacy cannot begin. If from the want of this intercourse, a feeling of hostility, as we have sometimes seen, be engendered between such powerful interests, the results as experience has taught us in other countries,

* A dedication to Lord Shelburne of "The Beauties of Goldsmith," published in 1782 by an Editor who signs the initials W. H. thus alludes to the supposed regard of his Lordship for the Poet.

"MY LORD,

"Your friendship for Dr. Goldsmith is a sufficient inducement for one to inscribe his Beauties to you. In all ages the illustrious and the learned have been courted in the highest strain of panegyric to take the offspring of Genius under their patronage. This I am prevented doing here, for the writings from which this cento of excellence is taken have long since found innumerable admirers in every polished society. My sole motive for addressing your Lordship, arises from your esteem for the author whose moral and sentimental writings have given birth to a volume every way meriting your Lordship's countenance."

are commonly unfavourable to rank, which can rarely contend successfully with the fierce and sometimes unscrupulous energy of abilities when excited by a sense of neglect or discouragement. Aristocracy whenever bitterly assailed by its enemies, has no surer means of subduing them than by condescension and kindness; and no more effectual whetstone to animosity than the appearance of contempt or indifference. But exclusive of the impolicy of men in elevated station wantonly offending a body that so much influences the reading and thinking part of mankind, there is in it something likewise of bad taste by the slur thus indirectly cast upon their own origin; for we are willing to believe, and it may not be safe to destroy the illusion, that rank owes its existence in nations to the display of some description of talents.

A few notices of his conversation, nearly all that remain to us of this period, it would be improper to omit.

At a dinner at General Paoli's where Martinelli who had written a History of England in Italian was present, a debate took place whether he should continue it down to that day.

Goldsmith. "To be sure he should." Johnson. "No, Sir; he would give great offence. He would have to tell of almost all the living great what they do not wish told." Goldsmith. "It may, perhaps, be necessary for a native to be more cautious; but a foreigner who comes among us without prejudice may be considered as holding the place of a judge, and may speak his mind freely." Johnson. "Sir, a foreigner, when he sends a work from the press, ought to be on his guard against catching the error and mistaken enthusiasm of the people among whom he happens to be." Goldsmith. "Sir, he wants only to sell his history, and to tell truth; one an honest, the other a laudable motive." Johnson. "Sir, they are both laudable motives. It is laudable in a man to wish to live by his labours; but he should write so as he may *live* by them, not so as he may be knocked on the head. I would advise him to be at Calais before he publishes his history of the present age. A foreigner who attaches himself to a political party in this country, is in the worst state that can be imagined; he is looked upon as a mere intermeddler. A native may do it from interest." Boswell. "Or principle."

Goldsmitb.—"There are people who tell a hundred political lies every day, and are not hurt by it. Surely then, one may tell truth with perfect safety." Johnson. "Why, Sir, in the first place, he who tells a hundred lies has disarmed the force of his lies. But besides; a man had rather have a hundred lies told of him, than one truth which he does not wish to be told." Goldsmith. "For my part, I'd tell truth, and shame the devil." Johnson. "Yes, Sir, but the devil will be angry. I wish to shame the devil as much as you do, but I should choose to be out of the reach of his claws." Goldsmith. "His claws can do you no hurt where you have the shield of truth."

It having been observed that there was little hospitality in London; Johnson. "Nay, Sir, any man who has a name or who has the power of pleasing, will be very generally invited in London. "The man, Sterne, I have been told, has had engagements for

three months." Goldsmith. "And a very dull fellow." Johnson. "Why no, Sir."

The party talked of the King's coming to see Goldsmith's new play. "I wish he would," said Goldsmith; adding however with an affected indifference, "Not that it would do me the least good." Johnson. "Well, then, Sir, let us say it would do him good (laughing.) No, Sir, this affectation will not pass,—it is mighty idle. In such a state as ours, who would not wish to please the chief magistrate?" Goldsmith. "I do wish to please him. I remember a line in Dryden,

'And every poet is the monarch's friend.'

It ought to be reversed." Johnson. "Nay, Sir, there are finer lines in Dryden on this subject.

'For colleges on bounteous kings depend,
And never rebel was to arts a friend.'

General Paoli observed, that successful rebels might. Martinelli. "Happy rebellions." Goldsmith. "We have no such phrase." General Paoli. "But have you not the *thing*?" Goldsmith. "Yes, all are *happy* revolutions. They have hurt our constitution, and will hurt it, till we mend it by another happy revolution." I never before discovered that my friend Goldsmith had so much of the old prejudice in him.

General Paoli, talking of Goldsmith's new play, said, "*Il a fait un compliment très-gracieux à une certain grande dame*;" meaning a duchess of the first rank.* I expressed a doubt, says Boswell, whether Goldsmith intended it, in order that I might hear the truth from himself. It, perhaps, was not quite fair to endeavour to bring him to a confession, as he might not wish to avow positively his taking part against the court.

He smiled and hesitated. The General at once relieved him by this beautiful image, "*Monsieur Goldsmith est comme la mer, qui jette des perles et beaucoup d'autres belles choses, sans s'en appercevoir*." Goldsmith. "*Très-bien dit, et très-élégamment*."

Speaking of suicide Johnson said, "I have often thought, that after a man has taken the resolution to kill himself, it is not courage in him to do any thing, however desperate, because he has nothing to fear." Goldsmith. "I don't see that." Johnson. "Nay, but my dear Sir, why should you not see what every one else sees?" Goldsmith. "It is in fear of something that he has resolved to kill himself; and will not that timid disposition restrain him?" Johnson. "It does not signify that the fear of something made him resolve; it is upon the state of his mind after the resolution is taken that I argue."

An opinion of his, hazarded more than once in conversation was, that vanity constituted one of the chief springs of human action.

* This speech has been noticed in a previous page as applying to the Duchess of Gloucester.

This was controverted by Johnson and others, yet he may not have been far wrong; for when minutely examined, the love of distinction, let this passion be called ambition or vanity or any other name we please, is unquestionably one of the strongest passions in the human breast. He appears not to have been singular in the opinion, though he had not then the means of knowing the concurrence in it of a brother poet. Pope said, "It is vanity which makes the rake at twenty, the worldly man at forty, and the retired man at sixty."*

The custom of eating dogs at Otaheite being mentioned, at General Oglethorpe's table, Goldsmith observed that this was also a custom in China; that a dog-butcher is as common there as any other butcher; and that when he walked abroad all the dogs fall on him.† Johnson. "That is not owing to his killing dogs; Sir, I remember a butcher at Lichfield, whom a dog that was in the house where I lived always attacked. It is the smell of carnage which provokes this; let the animals he has killed be what they may." Goldsmith. "Yes, there is a general abhorrence in animals at the signs of massacre. If you put a tub full of blood into a stable, the horses are likely to go mad." Johnson. "I doubt that." Goldsmith. "Nay, Sir, it is a fact well authenticated." Thrall. "You had better prove it before you put it into your book on natural history. You may do it in my stable if you will." Johnson. "Nay, Sir, I would not have him prove it. If he is content to take his information from others, he may get through his book with little trouble, and without much endangering his reputation. But if he makes experiments for so comprehensive a book as his, there would be no end to them; his erroneous assertions would fall then upon himself; and he might be blamed for not having made experiments as to every particular."

The character of Mallet having been introduced and spoken of slightly by Goldsmith; Johnson. "Why, Sir, Mallet had talents enough to keep his literary reputation alive as long as he himself lived; and that let me tell you is a good deal." Goldsmith. "But I cannot agree it was so. His literary reputation was dead long before his natural death. I consider an author's literary reputation to be alive only while his name will ensure a good price for his copy from the booksellers. I will get you (to Johnson) a hundred guineas for any thing whatever that you shall write, if you put your name to it."

In allusion to the received opinion of the migration of birds which an essay of Mr. Daines Barrington attempted to controvert, Johnson observed that the evidence in favour of woodcocks doing so was nearly conclusive. When it was said that some were found in Essex in summer, he remarked that the exception proved the rule; some being found, proved that if all remained many would be found. Goldsmith said, "There is a partial migration of the swallows; the stronger ones migrate, the others do not;" an opinion

* Spence's Anecdotes, p. 203, 8vo. 1820.

† This account appears likewise in *Animated Nature* in speaking of the dog.

which after some fluctuations for and against it seems now to be pretty generally received among naturalists.

In reply to a remark of Johnson that birds build by instinct; they never improve; the Poet observed, "Yet we see if you take away a bird's nest with the eggs in it, she will make a slighter nest and lay again." When it was said that this arose from having less time in which to make a second nest, Goldsmith continued, "The nidification of birds is what is least known in natural history, though one of the most curious things in it."

During a dinner given by Dilly the bookseller who was a dissenter, to several literary men, the subject of toleration being started, Johnson excited no small admiration by the vigour and ingenuity of his arguments; but an error and perhaps a little conversational rivalry of Goldsmith, who took part in the discussion, gave rise to one of those sallies of irritability from the moralist which all his friends were occasionally obliged to endure.

Johnson. "Sir, the only method by which religious truth can be established is by martyrdom. The magistrate has a right to enforce what he thinks; and he who is conscious of the truth has a right to suffer. I am afraid there is no other way of ascertaining the truth, but by persecution on the one hand, and enduring it on the other."

Goldsmith. "But how is a man to act, Sir? Though firmly convinced of the truth of his doctrine, may he not think it wrong to expose himself to persecution? Is it not as it were committing voluntary suicide?" Johnson. "Sir, as to voluntary suicide, as you call it, there are twenty thousand men in an army who will go without scruple to be shot at, and mount a breach for five pence a day?" Goldsmith. "But have they a moral right to do this?" Johnson. "Nay, Sir, if you will not take the universal opinion of mankind, I have nothing to say. If mankind cannot defend their own way of thinking I cannot defend it. Sir, if a man is in doubt whether it would be better to expose himself to martyrdom or not, he should not do it. He must be convinced that he has a delegation from heaven."

Goldsmith. "I would consider whether there is a greater chance of good or evil upon the whole. If I see a man who has fallen into a well, I would wish to help him out; but if there is a greater probability that he shall pull me in, than that I shall pull him out, I would not attempt it. So were I to go to Turkey, I might wish to convert the Grand Signior to the Christian faith; but when I considered that I should probably be put to death without effecting my purpose in any degree, I should keep myself quiet."

Johnson. "Sir, you must consider that we have perfect and imperfect obligations. Perfect obligations, which are generally not to do something, are clear and positive; as, 'Thou shalt not kill.' But charity for instance is not definable by limits. It is a duty to give to the poor; but no man can say how much another should give to the poor, or when a man has given too little to save his soul. In the same manner it is a duty to instruct the ignorant, and of consequence to convert infidels to Christianity; but no man in the common course

of things is obliged to carry this to such a degree as to incur the danger of martyrdom, as no man is obliged to strip himself to the shirt, in order to give charity. I have said that a man must be persuaded that he has a particular delegation from heaven."

Goldsmith. "How is this to be known? our first reformers, who were burnt for not believing bread and wine to be Christ—" Johnson (interrupting him.) "Sir, they were not burnt for not believing bread and wine to be Christ, but for insulting those who did believe it."*

During some further discussion, Goldsmith is stated by Boswell, in that gratuitous spirit of censure which assumed to judge even of his thoughts, to have "sat in restless agitation from a wish to get in and *shine*."

"Finding himself excluded" (from the discussion) says that biographer, "he had taken his hat to go away, but remained for some time with it in his hand, like a gamester who at the close of a long night, lingers for a little while to see if he can have a favourable opportunity to finish with success. Once when he was beginning to speak he found himself overpowered by the loud voice of Johnson who was at the opposite end of the table and did not perceive Goldsmith's attempt. Thus disappointed of his wish to obtain the attention of the company, Goldsmith in a passion threw down his hat looking angrily at Johnson, and exclaiming in a bitter tone, '*Take it*.'

"When Toplady was going to speak, Johnson uttered some sound which led Goldsmith to think that he was beginning again and taking the words from Toplady. Upon which he seized this opportunity, continues Boswell, of venting his own envy and spleen under the pretext of supporting another person. "Sir (said he to Johnson,) the gentleman has heard you patiently for an hour; pray allow us now to hear him." Johnson (sternly). "Sir I was not interrupting the gentleman; I was only giving him a signal of my attention. Sir, you are impertinent." Goldsmith made no reply, but continued in the company for some time."†

When they met on the same evening at the club, the apology offered by the one, and the placable spirit in which, as was anticipated by the offender, it would be received by the other, did equal credit to both. The Poet appeared to sit silently brooding over Johnson's reprimand to him after dinner. Johnson perceived this, and said aside, "I'll make Goldsmith forgive me," and then called to him with a loud voice, "Dr. Goldsmith, something passed to-day where you and I dined; I ask your pardon." Goldsmith answered placidly, "It must be much from you, Sir, that I take ill." And so at once

* On this opinion of Johnson Mr. Croker has the following note; and Goldsmith's statement certainly agrees better with historical accounts:—

"This seems to be altogether contrary to the fact. The first reformers whether of Germany or England, were certainly not burned for insulting individuals; they were burned for heresy; and abominable as that was, it was less indefensible than what Johnson supposes, that they were burned for *insulting* individuals."

† Croker's edition of Boswell, vol. ii. pp. 238, 239.

the difference was over, and they were on as easy terms as ever, and Goldsmith rattled away as usual.”*

The whole of this scene though so amicably concluded, conveys a vivid impression of the power, not to say tyranny, which Johnson occasionally exercised over his coterie of personal friends. If they sometimes became impatient of being roughly or unfairly overborne by it, we must not be surprised; for however great his powers of conversation or argument, few are disposed to submit to a monopoly in that which is considered the joint stock of private society. Goldsmith therefore only did what others probably were as willing to do, had they possessed more courage or less prudence; neither can his remark in this instance be deemed personally offensive when in two previous efforts to speak he had been overpowered, and Johnson as we learn had already been heard for an hour. The recurrence of similar impetuosities of temper on the part of the latter, which it was equally painful to submit to or resent, had often irritated him; and it was in these moments when giving vent to an excusable dissatisfaction, that Boswell thought proper instead of the true cause, to attribute it to motives of “envy and spleen.”

From others likewise it appears he was subjected to mortifications by occasional impertinence or ill-breeding; some of these were ludicrous enough, some sufficiently provoking, as in the following instance. When talking in company with fluent vivacity, and as he believed to the satisfaction of those immediately within hearing, a foreigner who sat near and perceived Johnson rolling himself as if about to speak, suddenly stopped him, unconscious perhaps of the rudeness of which he was guilty, saying, “Stay, stay, Doctor Shonson is going to say something.” An interruption so little complimentary to the speaker, could not be otherwise than mortifying to any one, much more to a man of genius and reputation whose claims to be heard in general conversation were at least equal to most of his auditors.

Upon this person, Mr. George Michael Moser, a Swiss and keeper of the Royal Academy, not having forgotten the slight and having had time to sharpen his wit, he afterwards took a satisfactory revenge. While at dinner at that institution, a speech something similar in tendency addressed to another person in conversation with the poet at the moment Johnson seemed preparing to speak, was again made by the same offender, when Goldsmith sharply replied, “Are you sure that *you* can comprehend what he says?”

On another occasion, Graham one of the masters of Eton and author of the *Masque of Telemachus*, sat with Johnson and Goldsmith until he became under the influence of wine. To the former he chiefly addressed himself, and at length said, “You are a clever fellow to be sure, but you cannot write an essay like Addison, or verses like the *Rape of the Lock*.” At length he said, “Doctor, I should be glad to see you at Eton.” “I shall be glad to wait on you,” answered Goldsmith. “No,” replied Graham, “’tis not you I

* Croker’s Boswell, vol. ii. p. 241.

mean, Dr. *Minor*, 'tis Dr. *Major* there." Goldsmith was hurt by the slight estimation implied by the answer.—"Graham," said he afterwards, "is a fellow to make one commit suicide."

When his literary reputation had risen deservedly high, he found fault one evening in a circle of wits with Boswell, for assigning to Johnson the honours of unquestionable superiority in literature. "Sir," said he, "you are for making a monarchy of what should be a republic."

At the time Johnson agreed to travel to Scotland, Goldsmith observed says Boswell, that "he would be a dead weight for me to carry, and that I should never be able to get him along through the Highlands and Hebrides. Nor would he patiently allow me to enlarge upon Johnson's wonderful abilities; but exclaimed, 'Is he like Burke, who winds into a subject like a serpent?'"

These remarks, which arose in unreserved conversation and which like that on making literature a monarchy, was not in itself unjust, the biographer of Johnson attributes to envy; yet scarcely satisfied with himself for advancing such a charge, almost in the same sentence inconsistently confesses, "In my opinion, however, Goldsmith had not more of it (envy) than other people, but only talked of it freely." He omits to inform us that the great subject of his work made a similar confession, though we have it from another quarter.

"I never knew any man but one," says a writer who enjoyed much intimacy with, and felt unbounded admiration for, him to whom he alludes, "who had the honesty to confess that he had a tincture of envy in him." And this person we are informed, and the fact was thus stated during his life, by Davies the biographer of Garrick, was Dr. Johnson.*

The same writer who admits the good qualities of Goldsmith, omits to tell us that he likewise had equal courage to avow a similar weakness. It may be doubted whether either of these distinguished men really believed they were influenced by a passion which others take such pains to conceal, or expected that their candour should be turned with something of bitterness to their disadvantage. But admissions of this kind are dangerous experiments upon the generosity of mankind; we are all impatient of superiority, too ready and too willing to believe the frailties and imperfections of such as are above us either in rank or in talents. A close inquirer into human nature may perhaps trace in this very feeling something of that envy, or proneness to depreciate others, which we take such pains to condemn.

Literary envy is one of those unhappy infirmities even of genius, which is at once odious and unprofitable; yet some of the greatest names in our world of letters, such as Dryden, Addison, Pope, and many others have felt its influence. If it were the envy of a lover towards a favoured rival, of a minister displaced from power—of a general from the command of an army to make room for a successor, or a courtier supplanted by superior intrigue in royal favour, we might understand the passion, because the gain of one may be the

* Vol. ii. p. 285. Lond. 1780.

loss of another. But it is rarely or never so with the candidates for public favour in literature. Of fame, the great object of pursuit of men so engaged, there is abundance and to spare for all who can prove their claim to deserve it, for the merits of each are seldom so similar as to interfere one with another. Praise cannot be monopolized by any one person; no just ground for jealousy therefore exists where each will receive his due; where in fact the possession is so general, that we might almost with as much propriety envy him the bread he eats as the fame he enjoys. If a writer be dull, he will sink of himself and therefore save his opponents much trouble in trying to do it for him; if he possess desert, the general voice will award him reputation whatever may be the hostility or malevolence of individuals; the stream of favour may be obstructed for a time, but come it will if really deserved; and possibly come as in several instances with additional force by being momentarily diverted from its proper channel.

The envy, which like the love of play, Goldsmith somewhat ostentatiously thought proper to acknowledge, and of which some unfair advantage has been taken, proved a source of amusement rather than of anger or anxiety, to those against whom it was directed; it produced no overt acts of malevolence, and never went farther when he found a weak or objectionable passage in contemporary writers than the hasty sally, "What vile nonsense is this!" Men who really feel this passion, take care not to own it, and whenever felt, it is rarely confined as with him, to a splenetic remark in private society, but finds vent in anonymous writing, while the great literary antagonists of former days more manfully displayed their hostility in avowed criticism, or stinging and eloquent satire.

From all of these he was free; neither harsh invective nor unfair criticism, can be alleged against him even when writing under the concealment of contributor to a Review. His forbearance, where the temptation was great and the chance of discovery small, was not less than the want of it in men of inferior minds.

If a name be given to his prevailing passion for superiority, it would be rather rivalry, or emulation, than envy. It is no doubt true, that whether in his writings, his conversation, his pecuniary liberalities, his desire of being agreeable in society, his dress, his chambers, and in minor points, some beneath his notice and others impracticable of accomplishment without a universality of acquirements such as is denied to the faculties of man, he was impatient of being excelled. He was willing to believe he could himself do whatever he saw done by another. If this belief occasionally led him into the commission of absurdities, as we are led to believe by contemporary testimony, it was also perhaps the source of much of his greatness. On his first entering into literary life, he found the attention of the reading part of the people fixed upon the essays of Johnson, and thence he became an essayist; the novels of Smollett were universally read, and he aimed to be a novelist; Gray, Mason, Akenside, Armstrong, and others claimed the honours of poetry, and he aspired to be a poet; Hume, Smollett and Robertson having

acquired high reputation in history, he desired to be a historian; and dramatic writers were so numerous and many so fortunate, that believing his own powers not inferior to theirs, he became a successful dramatist. To call honest ambition of this kind envy, is obviously misapplication of language.

The excess alone of this emulative spirit exposed him to ridicule. A writer in one of the journals of the day (1773) in allusion to this says—"Now, there is Dr. G—th; not content with his fame in great things, he must have equal credit in small; if you were to meet him and boast of your shoes being well blacked, the Doctor would look down at his own and reply 'I think mine are still better done.'"

We may smile likewise at the attempt he is said to have made in the same spirit to play the orator. When Burke's name was mentioned with all the praise due to his extraordinary powers in parliament, he maintained, not altogether without foundation, that oratory was but a knack, and that almost any one who would take the trouble might in time become an orator. Being asked to exemplify his theory, he tried it on the spur of the moment, but as may be supposed from such an unpremeditated effort failed, somewhat to the amusement of his audience.

Another whim of his, that poets are, or should be, the best readers of poetry, although the examples of Dryden, Thomson, Congreve and others were adduced to the contrary, is mentioned by Malone.

"Of Goldsmith's deficiency in this respect I can speak from my own knowledge; for several years ago I was in company with him and Dr. Johnson; and after dinner the conversation happening to turn on this subject, Goldsmith maintained that a poet was more likely to pronounce verse with accuracy and spirit than other men. He was immediately called upon to support his argument by an example; a request with which he readily complied; and he repeated the first stanza of the ballad beginning with the words "At Upton on the Hill" with such false emphasis by marking the word *on* very strongly, that all the company agreed he had by no means established his position."

One of the things to the knowledge of which he did *not* pretend, was painting; this he avows in the dedication of the *Deserted Village*, and made the same acknowledgment in conversation with his countrymen, Barrett the landscape painter, and Barry. The former who is said to have painted a picture for him the history of which cannot be traced, spoke of the pleasure he had on more than one occasion experienced in his society; and very warmly praised his benevolence and lamented his premature death.

With Barry he was less cordial, arising from his intimacy with Sir Joshua, which it was one of the infirmities of temper so strongly characterizing the former eminent and irritable artist, not to forgive in his acquaintance. For a year or two indeed they met not unfrequently, and on one occasion at the house of Burke in London, when a discussion taking place on the arts, Goldsmith said he could not account for poetry, painting, and music, being called sister arts,

because he saw little connexion between them; he had heard of few who had excelled in one, who knew or cared more than persons in general, for any of the others; no man was eminent in any two of them. Poetry as an effort of mind, he considered so far beyond her companions as to be in some degree lowered by the association; painting for instance was in many respects a mechanical art, though undoubtedly in its highest range requiring great genius for its execution. A painting however was but a scene; a poem was composed of a series of scenes, and could enchain the attention or touch the affections infinitely more than any representation on canvass. Then a painter might execute during his life, fifty, or a hundred, or more, good paintings; while no genius could furnish such a number of good poems; this alone evinced the greater difficulty and superiority of the art.

Barry at length alarmed for the credit of his profession, grew vehement in its defence, and something dropped from him to the effect that he was astonished at the hardihood of persons venturing to argue upon subjects of which they knew nothing. The discussion dropped, and they had little intercourse afterwards. Barry however spoke of him kindly long after his death, praised his good qualities, yet commented freely on his foibles.*

* A lady of consideration and much good sense, now resident in Pembrokeshire, who in early life mingled in the society of eminent men at her father's house in London, gives the following sketch of Barry in a letter to the writer of these pages.

"I knew Mr. Barry in early life; for having taken a fancy to learn something of the art of engraving for my amusement, my father whose house was frequented by several men of letters and of the arts, indulged the whim. Barry was my instructor and took some pains with me; but the state of my eyes at length compelled me to desist; I had much respect for him as a well-intentioned, though in many points, singular man.

"In appearance there was little to distinguish him; for though of noble mind and elevated thoughts, little trace of these could be found in his countenance; his complexion was light, his figure clumsy, and his dress and person negligent to a degree that approached want of personal cleanliness. In manner he was plain, but energetic when excited by conversation, and then his language soared with the loftiness of his ideas, so that on many occasions he might be termed eloquent. The moral qualities and powers of men, the arts, and topics bearing upon such matters, were his favourite themes. He never seemed to be in unison with mirth and pleasantry, and had a laudable antipathy to ridicule, more especially when personal; to me he seemed to have one object chiefly in view in his discussions, that of raising, strengthening, and improving the mind, and this may account for his usual gravity of demeanour. He was no doubt ill-tempered, yet his detestation of personal ridicule belonged at least to goodness of disposition, if I may be permitted to consider the following as an instance.

"During one of the evening visits of Mrs. Barbauld at our house, she was accompanied by Miss S——, a young lady under her care, the daughter of a wealthy citizen, who by her manner and conversation obviously attaching more importance to the wealth of her father, than respect for mental excellence however great in her friend, did not long continue the charge of Mrs. Barbauld. On quitting the room, her behaviour and name afforded room for much censure and jest to the party. When they had nearly all departed, the indignation of Barry, who was present, and which had been smothered for a time, at length burst forth, declaring in vehement terms his contempt for persons who with no superiority of mind themselves, presumed to ridicule the errors of so young and inexperienced a creature. The de-

Acquitting Goldsmith of the passion of envy in its odious acceptance, it may be nevertheless true that having earned literary fame laboriously himself, he was unwilling to share it with such whose claims were either doubtful, or over-estimated by the zeal of private friendship. This has been one ground for the charge of envy. He never on such occasions concealed his opinions; and none that are recorded have proved wrong; but in return for his candour or imprudence, sometimes lost a friend or made an enemy.

Thus when Sir Joshua painted a fine allegorical picture of Beattie in his Doctor's dress, with his volume on the Immutability of Truth under his arm, the angel of Truth going before him and beating down the vices Envy, Falsehood, &c. the principal head in the group was made an exact likeness of Voltaire.* When Goldsmith saw this, he remonstrated with the President for placing an inferior writer however laudable his object, in competition with so great a genius, and pronounced that posterity would call him a flatterer. This came to the ears of Beattie, who in a letter to Mrs. Montagu, made against him the usual charge of envy.

"I am sorry," he says among other remarks, "for poor Goldsmith. There were some things in his temper which I did not like; but I liked many things in his genius; and I was sorry to find last summer that he looked upon me as a person who seemed to stand between him and his interest. However when *next* we meet, all this will be forgotten, and the jealousy of authors which Dr. Gregory used to say was next to that of physicians, will be no more."

fence which was very zealous, raised the painter much in our estimation, but not the young lady.

"He was accused of being parsimonious, but this I believe arose from the narrowness of his means, which admitted as I was told, of few comforts and no luxuries; he was indeed marked by many eccentricities, and therefore appeared from his habits poorer than he really was, though at the time I knew him these peculiarities were less known or less offensive than afterwards. The people in the street in which he lived annoyed him; and one day at a future time an acquaintance of ours passing through it, reported that he had seen him with his head out of the window in violent altercation with coal heavers, whom he accused of fraudulent practices with his coals.

"I remember he told us he had occasionally visited Dr. Johnson; and more than once during his last illness, when the mind of that eminent man was clouded by the prospect of death, of which he spoke with more apprehension than became so good a Christian and so great a philosopher. All the statements of Mr. Barry on this point, corroborated those which are to be found elsewhere, of the great sense of his imperfections entertained by the moralist. Latterly however these fears gave way, or rather his confidence in the merciful forgiveness of God became strong; and on one occasion he expressed himself so finely and eloquently on this head, that Barry said he always regretted not having written down the particulars on retiring from the interview.

"Until I read the life of Burke, whom I heard in Westminster Hall in the prosecution of Hastings, I was not aware of the great obligations of Barry to him; I never heard the latter mention him; and this now surprises me much, because most public names were brought in review before us in conversation on the passing matters of the day, and I had thought the painter's mind too noble to be ashamed to confess obligations to such a man as Burke. I am disposed to believe that a sense of his own demerits kept him silent."

* This picture was exhibited in the spring of 1774, and in the catalogue is called "Dr. Beattie triumphing over Infidelity."

The phrase "stand between him and his interest" alludes to an affair of personal rather than of literary rivalry, very little known. The reputation and general conduct of Beattie as a moral and able man, had procured him an introduction to, and gracious reception from his Majesty, and this mark of condescension was expected to be followed, as shortly afterward proved to be the case, by the royal bounty in the grant of a pension. To a similar act of favour Goldsmith had been looking as a source of relief from his difficulties, and was led to believe, probably with some foundation, that the grant to another would interfere with the expectations he had himself formed. His opinion of the *Essay on Truth*, from whatever motive given, appears to have been critically just; since however laudable the design, it has not retained its original hold on public esteem as a first-rate production.

Another supposed instance of his literary jealousy occurred at the house of Sir Joshua when perusing the poems of Miss Aikin, afterwards Mrs. Barbauld, which he pronounced of inferior merit; a decision then considered unjust. Time in this instance likewise has confirmed his opinion, for though pleasing, they have taken no strong hold on the regard of readers of poetry. It may be remarked here as a curious fact, that though the strength of female genius is supposed to lie chiefly in imagination, a quality considered above all others essential to poetry, we have not in the long list of standard English poets, a female writer, who has been thought worthy of admission among the number; while as novelists and dramatists there are several of eminent merit. Strength of thinking, of sentiment, and of expression, are perhaps as necessary to good poetry as even what is called imagination; and a large range of observation, with an experience of mankind not always within the reach of women from their position in society, may prevent their attaining such excellence in that as in other departments of authorship. Madame de Staël indeed seems one of those who had vigour and originality of thought for a great poet, had nature furnished her with the other requisites for such a character.

The early part of the summer of 1773, appears to have been spent in London, for we find Beauclerk in his usual strain of sarcastic remark thus writing to Lord Charlemont from Muswell Hill, July 5th.

"I have been but once at the club since you left England; we were entertained as usual by Dr. Goldsmith's absurdities."

Disregard of times, places, and circumstances, and occasionally of persons, arising partly from absence of mind, partly from a simplicity that led him to give utterance to such thoughts as other men conceal, were the peculiarities to which Beauclerk alludes. An instance will illustrate this better than description. When dining with a tradesman in the city, a very opulent man though exercising the not very exalted calling of a carcass-butcher, he was so impressed by the splendour of the house and table, that with an air of surprise he asked him before several strangers "How much money he made annually by his business?" One of his odd speeches, characteristic of his simplicity and quite true in its purport, was more than once

repeated. "People," said he, "are greatly mistaken in me; a notion goes about that when I am silent I mean to be impudent; but I assure you, gentlemen, my silence proceeds from bashfulness."

To a man of fashion and a wit, oddities of speech, person, or manner furnish themes for ridicule that all their admiration of genius cannot suppress; and deviation from conventional forms meets from them with little forbearance. It is to this we owe Lord Chesterfield's description of Dr. Johnson; to this also Horace Walpole's impertinence towards him and to Goldsmith; and Beauclerk while professing himself superior to the prejudices of his class in fashionable life, could not wholly escape a similar feeling. The blunders therefore, the constraint, or abstractions of a scholar in his serious moods, his irregular mirth, or thoughtless conversation when amused, an unpolished address, bluntness of speech, or smaller breaches of modes which the solitary student does not know, or regards not if known, become with such persons serious matters. They do not discriminate between him who makes the forms of the drawing-room his chief business in life, and him whose occupation it is to amuse or instruct mankind.

So much likewise is expected from the conversation of authors, that they are often denied the license granted to others of giving free utterance to unpremeditated thoughts; while some of their auditors seem to think slightly of such as discard reserve, and who aim to be merely easy and natural, perhaps careless, in what they advance. Thus we sometimes find disappointment expressed at hearing nothing from them in occasional association very remarkable; no maxim of wisdom, pungency of wit, or flight of imagination; as if the mass of persons commonly met with in private life deserved this stretch of mind by the possession of corresponding powers, or had any just right to expect it. Society would be a serious tax upon a popular writer were he to enter it with his mind wound up like a harp-string for the gratification of many who are at best idle, though inquisitive listeners. Even if he excels in conversation, it may be prudent not to obtrude it; to be read in books in the morning, and listened to at night in the drawing-room circle, is a greater degree of attention than we are willing to concede to any whose claims are not of very commanding character.

Yet Goldsmith suffered in the estimation of contemporaries by the absence of all pretension in private intercourse, by affecting playfulness, and familiarity when perhaps more reserve might have procured the reputation of more wisdom. He was willing to sink something of the philosopher for the pleasure of being agreeable; feeling satisfied that his writings at least would shield him from any supposed loss of dignity. In general society, where his talents and superiority were admitted without dispute, this might be safely done; but it was imprudent among rivals for literary as well as colloquial fame, a few of whom as they could not equal the one, were willing enough to depreciate the other. On this point, Boswell was more indulgent or more just to him than upon others. "For my part," he says, "I like very well to hear honest Goldsmith

talk away carelessly." And the Poet's opinion of the license which he claimed in talking may be gathered from a remark addressed to Dr. Douglas, Bishop of Salisbury, who is mentioned in *Retaliation*, in support of an argument of his to a similar effect. "There is a relief to the mind in disburthening itself of all its thoughts of whatever description; men in writing books are obliged to please others, but in talking they may be permitted to please themselves."

Johnson's view of conversation differed so wholly from this, that he was no more off his guard in speaking than in writing. To the one it was generally a matter of relaxation; to the other an effort of intellectual labour, an occasion of argumentative contest and of triumph. His standard of excellence being high, he brought to it all the vigour of his mind, and as there were few to whom he gave credit for superior conversational powers, we can experience little surprise that the following remarks should be passed upon the more incautious characteristics of his friend.

"The misfortune of Goldsmith in conversation is this, he goes on without knowing how he is to get off. His genius is great but his knowledge is small. As they say of a generous man it is a pity he is not rich, we may say of Goldsmith it is a pity he is not knowing. He would not keep his knowledge to himself."

"Of Dr. Goldsmith he said," writes Mr. Langton, but this seems one of those phrases used not for their truth or accuracy, but for antithetic effect, "no man was more foolish when he had not a pen in his hand, or more wise when he had."

"It is amazing how little Goldsmith knows; he seldom comes where he is not more ignorant than any one else." "Yet there is no man," observed Sir Joshua Reynolds, "whose company is more liked." "To be sure, Sir," was the reply, "when people find a man of the most distinguished abilities as a writer, their inferior while he is with them, it must be highly gratifying to them. What Goldsmith comically says of himself is very true; he always gets the better when he argues alone; meaning that he is master of a subject in his study and can write well upon it; but when he comes into company, grows confused and is unable to talk."

In censuring Mr. Thrale for sitting silent on one occasion at a dinner table, Boswell observed that Goldsmith was in the other extreme, for he spoke at all ventures. "Yes, Sir, Goldsmith, rather than not speak, will talk of what he knows himself to be ignorant, which can only end in exposing him. If in company with two founders he would fall a talking on the method of making cannon, though both of them would soon see that he did not know what metal a cannon is made of."

"Goldsmith," he said on another occasion, "should not be for ever attempting to shine in conversation; he has not temper for it, he is so much mortified when he fails. Sir, a game of jokes is composed partly of skill partly of chance; a man may be beat at times by one who has not the tenth part of his wit. Now Goldsmith's putting himself against another is like a man laying a hundred to one, who cannot spare the hundred. It is not worth a

man's while. A man should not lay a hundred to one, unless he can easily spare it, though he has a hundred chances for him; he can get but a guinea and he may lose a hundred. Goldsmith is in this state. When he contends, if he gets the better, it is a very little addition to a man of his literary reputation; if he does not get the better, he is miserably vexed."

These observations, scattered over a space of many years, were made we should remember in the laxity of familiar converse, when even Johnson on such occasions would prove frequently lax and inconsistent with himself, however sharp upon others for the same offence. We can therefore scarcely place implicit dependence upon them as his deliberate opinion, which is to be sought rather in what he has written than in what he has spoken. He considered Goldsmith like Garrick, as in some measure his own property, whom he had therefore a license to attack at pleasure, although he would not allow the same liberty to others; but it may be doubted whether he wished such remarks to be remembered. What we are tempted to say of those we nevertheless admire and esteem in hasty sallies of conversation, often perhaps of erroneous impressions or from slight indiscretions, it is unfair for others to dwell upon and repeat. Every one has felt his opinions often vary respecting the same individual. Were a list shown us after the lapse of a few years, of all the remarks we had made on our best and most familiar friends, we should scarcely believe the record; while such as knew our intimacy and did not make allowance for this species of human infirmity, might consider us either very insincere companions, or our acquaintance exceptionable characters.

Of the inconsiderate tone of conversation thus laid to his charge and probably in some instances true, it is remarkable that excepting one or two anecdotes of his emulative spirit, no examples are given to enable us to judge of the fact. We look in vain in such as are preserved, for weakness, or deficient point or vigour. On the contrary good sense, justness of observation, and a degree of wit characterize so many of his sayings, that we are induced to believe they were far from being unfrequent had there been a friendly hand always near to note them down.

Speaking of Johnson and of his dexterity in getting out of an indifferent argument with success, he said, 'There is no arguing with Johnson; for when his pistol misses fire, he knocks you down with the but-end of it.'

To the goodness of disposition of the same friend he has borne testimony in a pointed sentence, "Johnson to be sure has a roughness of manner, but no man alive has a better heart. *He has nothing of the bear but his skin.*"

He sometimes ventured upon the hazardous undertaking of exercising his wit or humour upon the moralist, and not without success. One of the happiest retorts imaginable considering the character of him to whom it was addressed, was heard by Sir Joshua Reynolds. Goldsmith after mentioning that he thought he could write a good fable and stating the simplicity which that kind of composition re-

quired, observed that in most fables the animals introduced seldom talk in character. "For instance," said he, "the fable of the little fishes who saw birds fly over their heads, and envying them, petitioned Jupiter to be changed into birds. The skill consists in making them talk like little fishes." While he indulged this idea which it may be regretted he did not execute, he observed Johnson shaking his sides and laughing, and immediately continued, "Why, Dr. Johnson, this is not so easy as you seem to think; for if you were to make little fishes talk, they would talk like whales."

On another occasion when Beauclerk was present, Goldsmith talked of a project for having a third theatre in London solely for the exhibition of new plays, in order to deliver authors from the supposed tyranny of managers. Johnson treated it slightly, when Goldsmith rejoined, "Ay, ay, this may be nothing to you who can now shelter yourself behind the corner of a pension."

Johnson told the following anecdote himself. "I remember once being with Goldsmith in Westminster Abbey. While we surveyed the Poet's Corner, I said to him—

‘Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur istis.’

When we got to Temple Bar, he stopped me, pointed to the heads upon it and silyly whispered me—

‘Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur ISTIS.’ ”

Another instance of the freedom he occasionally took though not without suffering in return, is of undoubted authenticity.

While at supper on one occasion tête-à-tête at Jack's Coffee House Dean Street Soho,* on rumps and kidneys, Johnson observed, "Sir, these rumps are pretty little things, but then a man must eat a great many of them before he fills his belly." "Ay, but," said Goldsmith, "how many of these would reach to the moon?" "To the moon! ay, Sir, I fear that exceeds your calculation." "Not at all, Sir," says Goldsmith, "I think I could tell." "Pray then let us hear." "Why one if it were long enough." Johnson growled at this reply for some time, but at last recollecting himself, "Well, Sir, I have deserved it; I should not have provoked so foolish an answer by so foolish a question."

In classical quotation he was frequently happy, applied to passing characters and circumstances. Thus, according to the late Sir George Beaumont, on first meeting with a military man to whom he

* This house was one of their occasional resorts, as well as of Reynolds and others of their friends. Garrick recommended it, from being kept by Mr. John Roberts one of the singers of Drury Lane theatre, from whose Christian name it is said to have derived its appellation, for when a question arose as to which tavern a party should adjourn to, the common answer was to *Jack's*. It is said to have been, even in 1770, the oldest tavern in London but three, and having continued in the family of the present occupier since that time, is now probably the oldest. At present it is known as Walker's Hotel, and the proprietor shows the room which the wits of that age frequented.

took dislike from what seemed to be coarseness if not ferocity of manners, and on being told that his was a mistake and that the rude soldier was a man of letters and a scholar, he said, "Then I must be in error, for you know

'Ingenuas didicisse fideliter artes
Emollit mores, nec finit esse feros.' "

Of his simplicity or absence of mind, several anecdotes were told by the lively men with whom he associated; Beauclerk, Foote, Richard Burke, Garrick, Colman, and others; and these if even problematical, it may be considered the duty of a biographer not to omit. Professed wits are not celebrated for accuracy of detail; strict matter of fact militates often against a good story; and a very small foundation of fact is sufficient on which to erect a superstructure which if not very true may be very amusing.

Mr. Beauclerk, whose humour turned almost every incident into a subject of ridicule, tells the following story to Lord Charlemont at this period (November 1773.)

"Goldsmith the other day put a paragraph into the newspapers in praise of Lord Mayor Townshend.* The same night he happened to sit next to Lord Shelburne at Drury Lane; I mentioned the circumstance of the paragraph to him and he said to Goldsmith, that he hoped he had mentioned nothing about Malagrida in it. 'Do you know,' answered Goldsmith, 'that I never could conceive the reason why they called you Malagrida, *for* Malagrida was a very good sort of a man.' You see plainly what he meant to say, but that happy turn of expression is peculiar to himself. Mr. Walpole says that this story is a picture of Goldsmith's whole life."

The blunder, though the meaning was obvious, arose, if it really took place, from the omission of a word or two which might readily occur in the hurry of conversation: "I never could conceive the reason why they call you Malagrida *as a term of reproach*;" but the vein of ridicule evinced in the following passage from the same letter induces a suspicion of the truth of the whole, for the story is equally gravely told. "Johnson has been confined for some weeks in the Isle of Sky; we hear that he was obliged to swim over to the mainland taking hold of a cow's tail. Be that as it may, Lady Di has promised to make a drawing of it."

From the same witty source the following story found circulation.

When dining with Sir Joshua Reynolds, Goldsmith found early peas upon the table, which however from mismanagement of the cook proved to be yellow; when some one sitting next him observed that they had better be sent to Hammersmith. "And why thither?" asked the Poet. "That is the way to Turn'em green." The pun

* This has been sought for in three or four journals without success; the circumstance is unlike his usual habits as he meddled not in city matters, or even in general politics.

pleased him so much as to be thought worth repeating the first favourable moment as one of his own. An opportunity soon offered or was chosen for this purpose, when Burke who was equally ambitious of the credit of a good pun chanced to sit next him; the peas were again with an air of disapprobation of their colour, recommended the journey to Hammersmith; the question why it should be so was again repeated, when Goldsmith forgetting his cue replied, "That is the way to *make 'em green*." Perceiving his error in the want of applause from the company he immediately added, "I mean that is the *road* to 'Turn'em green." Again discovering that the witticism fell pointless, he started up disconcerted and quitted the table abruptly.

Another anecdote, told to Mr. Croker by Colonel O'Moore, is no doubt, as he justly remarks, coloured or exaggerated, or indeed nothing more than another version of his alleged jealousy of the ladies in Flanders. As the Colonel and Mr. Burke were proceeding to dine with Sir Joshua, they observed Goldsmith, also on his way thither, standing near a crowd who were staring and shouting at some foreign women in the windows of a house in Leicester Square. "Observe Goldsmith," said Burke to his companion, "and mark what passes between him and me by and by at Sir Joshua's." Proceeding forward, they reached the house before him; and when the Poet came up to Mr. Burke, the latter affected to receive him coolly, when an explanation of the cause of offence was with some urgency requested. Burke appeared reluctant to speak, but after some pressing said, that he almost regretted keeping up an intimacy with one who could be guilty of such indiscretions as he had just exhibited in the square. The Poet with great earnestness protested he was unconscious of what was meant. "Why," said Mr. Burke, "did you not exclaim as you were looking up at those women, what stupid beasts the people must be for staring with such admiration at those painted jezebels while a man of your talents passed by unnoticed?" Goldsmith was astonished. "Surely, surely, my dear friend, I did not say so." "Nay," replied Mr. Burke, "if you had not said so how should I have known it?" "That's true," answered Goldsmith with great humility; "I am very sorry—it was very foolish; I do recollect that something of the kind passed through my mind, but I did not think I had uttered it."

Of the waggery occasionally practised upon him, the following is an instance which occurred at the house of Mr. Burke and has been told in another place,* though as illustrative of character, no apology will be necessary for its introduction here. The lady who personated her part so well was the sister of the lady of General Haviland who resided at Penn in Buckinghamshire, and whose son married the niece of Burke.

"Mrs. Balfour, who was a woman of lively disposition, is said to have given Garrick the first idea of the character of the *Irish Widow* in his farce of that name by a trick played off in a familiar party

* Life of Burke vol. i. p. 454.—Communicated by Thos. Haviland Burke, Esq.

upon the simplicity of Goldsmith. This lady it seems for a piece of amusement personated such a character—just arrived from Ireland, full of brogue and blunders—with wit, rant, and impudence—a little gentility nevertheless—and added to all, assuming to be an authoress soliciting subscriptions for her poems. Some of these she read with an affected enthusiasm which created the greatest amusement to those who were in the secret. Goldsmith—the great Goldsmith as she called him, her countryman, and, of course, friend, she flattered extravagantly, and repeatedly appealed to him on the merit of the pieces, which he praised with all due warmth in her presence—offered his subscription—and as strongly abused the verses (as well perhaps he might) when she retired. This scene, it is said presented a finished piece of acting. Garrick seized upon the character for representation, and brought forward his piece in 1772, the Widow being admirably performed by Mrs. Barry.

CHAPTER XXV.

A Survey of Experimental Philosophy.—Address on the opening of the Opera House.—Retaliation.—History of the Earth and Animated Nature.—Second edition of Polite Learning.—Scarron's Romance.—His illness and death.

DURING the latter end of 1773 and the early part of the following year, his literary labours were sufficiently multifarious to become occasionally distracting to a mind otherwise ill at ease.

Besides writing and carrying through the press the Grecian History, he was engaged in a similar way upon the History of the Earth and Animated Nature, and upon a third History of England in one large volume duodecimo for the use of schools, which came out after his death in September 1774. He was likewise revising the Inquiry into Polite Learning for a new edition; writing at favourable intervals the poem of Retaliation; translating the Comic Romance of Scarron: and arranging papers gleaned in part probably for the Dictionary of Arts, into a work in two volumes commenced long before and mentioned in a preceding page, "A Survey of Experimental Philosophy, considered in its present state of Improvement."

The preliminary advertisement of the publishers (Carnan and Newbery) states, that "The first volume of this work was printed off in the life-time of the author; the second after his death; the whole of the copy being put into the hands of the publisher long before that period." Of this there is no reasonable doubt, for it was announced as being in the press three months after his death,* although not published till 1776, the delay being probably caused by

* Morning Chronicle, July 1, 1774.

the necessity of further revision. Several mistakes remain, showing that the writer had consulted rather the books of a preceding age than the practical knowledge of his own; and this accounts for the compilation never having become popular. It has many obvious traces of his pen, and betrays even in the introductory remarks what might be expected from him, more of the tone of the moral, than of the natural philosopher.

At the opening of the Opera-house November 20th, 1773, Mrs. Yates, the actress, who had quarrelled with Colman and had then no engagement in London at either of the English theatres, spoke a Poetical Exordium written for her by Goldsmith. The following notice of it the same evening, appears in a letter of Beauclerk to Lord Charlemont. "Goldsmith has written a prologue for Mrs. Yates which she spoke this evening before the opera. It is very good. You will soon see it in all the newspapers, otherwise I would send it to you."

It is singular that a piece thus necessarily so public from the place where it was delivered, and pronounced to be "good" by a critic so fastidious as Beauclerk, should not, as he anticipated, have appeared in the newspapers of the day, or in any collection of his works since. Several copies besides that furnished to Mrs. Yates, we may believe were in circulation, by the offer made in the preceding letter of sending one to Lord Charlemont; yet in the anxiety to collect all his verses after death, these have never appeared; nor are they alluded to in any memoir of him; neither has their existence notwithstanding diligent inquiry been ascertained. The only probable explanation seems, that being either withheld for some other purpose by the author, or given by him to Bishop Percy with other papers, it was subsequently lost, as hinted to that prelate by Malone in one of his letters. It is possible likewise that if Colman felt offended by allusions to the situation of the first tragic actress of the day being unengaged in the national theatres, the Poet may have been willing to propitiate him by the suppression of the whole.

In the bills of the day it is called "A Poetical Exordium." The chief subject on which it touched was the history of the revival of the polite arts in Italy and the effect produced by their union with each other; allusions were likewise introduced to the situation of the speaker herself in connexion with the tragic drama. The house was more crowded and brilliant than had been usually witnessed on the first night of performance, and the applause loud and universal. Yet from whatever cause, it appears not to have been repeated.

The next exercise of his poetical powers was one, which though seemingly playful, required for its successful execution no ordinary portion of address and ingenuity.

However little disposed to question his genius, few of his friends had given him credit for close observation of mankind, or that insight into individual character which men of the world think exclusively their own. Yet a very ordinary examination of his writings might have convinced them, that no one could have written as he wrote, without enjoying large acquaintance with the ways of life

and with human nature. As a set-off to these indeed, they saw his peculiar habits, his occasional simplicity, his benevolence, and his consideration, not always wise or well-timed, for the undeserving. His oddities in consequence of this good-nature became what was deemed fair game for professed wits and jesters; and as he had hitherto given no proof of disposition to satire, it was thought this species of mirth might be indulged with impunity. To this mistake we owe the origin of "Retaliation;" one of those felicitous productions which struck off amid serious anxieties and various literary labours, leaves the impression of a mind unoccupied and at ease. It arose not from a scene at the Literary Club in Gerard Street as sometimes said, but from a more miscellaneous meeting, consisting of a few of its members and their friends who assembled to dine at the St. James's Coffee-house. Thus Richard and William Burke, Cumberland, Ridge, and Hickey who have a place in the poem, were never members of the original club; nor was Dr. Douglas, till after the death of the Poet.

Much mirth and convivial pleasantry appears to have resulted from their meetings. The late Sir George Beaumont mentioned that whatever was the dinner hour, whether in a private or public party, Goldsmith always came late and generally in a bustle. A peculiarity like this which is always noticed, is often disagreeable, and certainly never to be classed among the minor virtues, drew attention upon him at table, and became a source of banter to his companions; this led to further observation; his person, dialect and manners, his genius mingled with peculiarities, his negligences and blunders, often no doubt the effects of abstraction, furnished a theme for jocular notice, too tempting to be lost by men drawn together to amuse and be amused; and the remark of some one how he would be estimated by posterity first gave rise to the idea of characterizing him by epitaphs.

It does not appear that many were written, or none that deserved remembrance, except that by Garrick, of which the following is stated to be an exact copy.*

"Here lies Poet Goldsmith, for shortness called Noll,
Who wrote like an angel, but talk'd like poor Poll."

Another was written upon him by Caleb Whitefoord as stated to the writer by the relatives of that gentleman, who is also said to have exercised his pen in a similar manner upon Cumberland. The former forgave the offence with his usual placability, but not so the latter, and they were thenceforward not friends; both these were once in the cabinet of Garrick, though neither being preserved, their merit was probably inconsiderable.

Cumberland and Cradock have each in their memoirs stated they were present on the occasion that gave birth to *Retaliation*. There is however no identity of circumstances in their respective relations, which from the minuteness of detail given by Cumberland must have been the case had both been present; we are reduced therefore to the necessity of believing that one only, or probably neither, were

* By Dr. M'Donnell.

there. The explanation may be this. Writing from memory at the distance of thirty and forty years respectively, and desirous of being thought present at an interesting scene in literary history, they seem to have described what they heard shortly after the occurrence, with what they saw on another occasion at the same place, and to have confounded the circumstances in their recollection. The account of Cradock as being more general is on the whole more probable.

Cumberland is too commonly inaccurate to be safely followed; nor are his anecdotes told quite in character. When, for instance, he describes himself as retiring to a side table to write couplets on Goldsmith, and Johnson as snatching them from his hand to read to the company, we may fairly doubt whether this occurred; of all men the moralist had least sympathy with practical jokes, of which this must be considered one of the rudest; neither would he probably read aloud what was thought likely to give pain to his friend. When we find likewise that Sir Joshua is mentioned as illuminating the epitaph written by Dean Barnard with a pen and ink sketch of the Poet's bust "inimitably caricatured," we may be certain of misstatement; for this was wholly foreign to the president's habits as Northcote observes, and assuredly would not have been done to one whose feelings he was at all times solicitous not to offend. A third statement of his connected with the poem is still more unsupported by fact. "Goldsmith sickened and died, and we had one concluding meeting at my house, when it was decided to publish his *Retaliation*." Whatever such a meeting, if it really occurred, might decide, it had no power to accelerate or retard a production which had then found its way into other hands.

By comparing minute circumstances, it would appear that the affair of the epitaphs was not confined to one evening, and that when first produced, Goldsmith was not present. As he was known to be sensitive, though soon disposed to forget offence, it is not probable he would sit patiently to be made the subject of ridicule to a party some of whom were little known to him, or that others would so far trespass on presumed good nature as to attempt it in his presence, though what was said or written no doubt reached him soon afterward. On the other hand it is equally certain that "*Retaliation*" was not read to the club in its meetings. Of the existence of the poem the greater part of the members were ignorant until its appearance from the press; by whose instrumentality it has not been ascertained, though at first supposed to be from a copy in the hands of Mr. Bott. Two or three others were given to particular friends with strict injunctions to secrecy until the plan should be so far completed as to admit of being brought out with effect, and turn the laugh not of the tavern party merely, but of the kingdom against the aggressors. Mr. Burke is said to have had a sketch of a few of the characters; and Mrs. Cholmondeley another copy more complete. Its date likewise has been doubted. The period however at which it was written may be ascertained with tolerable precision by the line—

"Our Dods shall be pious, our Kenricks shall lecture."

The allusion applies to a series of lectures on Shakspeare, commenced by Kenrick in the great room of the Devil Tavern at Temple Bar on the 19th January 1774, and continued weekly for a considerable time. We may therefore assign the month of February, he being unwell in March, as the date of the chief part of the composition; and judging from its nature, we may believe it was not struck off at a heat. To plunge into the recesses of character and bring up to the surface what the owner himself is scarcely conscious of, or would willingly conceal, requires time, care, and repeated touching to be accurate. Thus, those he had known the longest, such as Burke and Garrick, are finished in the best manner; while to Dean Barnard, who was of only a few weeks' acquaintance as the poem intimates, he has been unable to assign a distinguishing character.

A production such as this presents no ordinary difficulties to the writer, as he requires for its execution great acuteness and much good nature, keen perception of the shades of character, and deep insight into the human heart. Indiscriminate satire is of no very difficult accomplishment. Neither is much skill required to sketch our friends so gently or generally as to give no offence. But to be at once searching and accurate, to individualize the man from his species, to unveil foibles without violently shocking self-love, and while probing them to inflict no pain; to be faithful yet friendly, witty and discreet; to exhibit minute delicacy of touch, with perfect truth in the painting so that all the world shall see the likeness without the original having cause for reasonable offence in the display of his imperfections, is one of those happinesses that high genius alone can hope to accomplish, and this Goldsmith has done. We are not perhaps wholly conscious of the difficulty of such an attempt until we ourselves make it. The same felicitous qualities exhibited in a somewhat different manner, have given Horace a reputation that no time is likely to impair.

Immediate notice was drawn to the characters of Burke and Garrick as those on which he had bestowed the most pains, and directed the most pointed satire; for to each was given that specific appropriateness considered essential to the epitaph whether serious or jocular, by which what is said of one person cannot wholly be applied to another. Burke had incurred his playful indignation by practising some tricks and relating certain stories to his annoyance; he was likewise a Whig, of which body Goldsmith, like Johnson, entertained an indifferent opinion; he was also a leader of the opposition; and if we believe Northcote, had one day at Reynold's spoken so freely of royalty as to give offence to Goldsmith. From this cause perhaps we have much of his public, and but little of his private character.

Garrick was a more serious offender. Notwithstanding some pecuniary favours, he had occasionally touched both the pride and interests of the satirist; he had refused his plays; he had shown a disposition to be witty or unduly familiar with him in company, yet in private sometimes exhibited an air of reserve or superiority difficult not to resent, and of which the Poet complained to Reynolds, ob-

serving on one occasion that he would not suffer such airs of importance from one who was only a "poor player." An allusion to this conduct expressed in mild terms, occurs in the lines—

"He casts off his friends as a huntsman his pack,
For he knows when he likes he can whistle them back."

To the list of his offences was now to be added the couplet forming the epitaph, and when we remember that it was a gratuitous and pointed attack upon one who gave no provocation, it will be admitted that "Retaliation" exhibits forbearance and good humour.

Two epigrams by Garrick are commonly supposed to have whetted the satire of Goldsmith; but this is a mistake; they followed, not preceded, that poem, as the first sufficiently indicates.* The other, also written subsequently and not made public till 1776, bears traces of more deliberation and labour, and aims to give the character of the Poet with all its foibles and contrarieties. So far it follows the idea of his own character in the poem, and it further imitates Goldsmith in being pungent without displaying ill nature; it is however much overcharged for a correct portrait; and the idea is not original, but borrowed from Swift's lines on Mrs. Biddy Floyd, where Jove and Cupid unite their skill to form a beauty.†

Sir Joshua Reynolds is drawn with less distinctness and precision than a little more labour would have bestowed, but like the poem itself his character was left unfinished. Whether it would have possessed equal spirit with either of the preceding is doubtful, for we can rarely touch even with the gentlest hand, the foibles of such as we cordially and unreservedly love; and of all whom he knew, Reynolds held the highest place in his affection and esteem, and deserved it by as warm a return of regard. Among several erasures in the

* ON DR. GOLDSMITH'S CHARACTERISTIC COOKERY.

"Are these the choice dishes the Doctor has sent us?
Is this the great poet whose works so content us?
This Goldsmith's fine feast who has written fine books?
Heaven sends us good *meat* but the devil sends *cooks*!"

† "Here, Hermes, says Jove, who with nectar was mellow,
Go fetch me some clay,—I will make an odd fellow:
Right and wrong shall be jumbled—much gold and some dross,
Without cause be he pleased, without cause be he cross;
Be sure as I work to throw in contradictions,
A great love of truth, yet a mind turned to fictions;
Now mix these ingredients, which warm'd in the baking,
Turn'd to *learning* and *gaming*, *religion* and *raking*.
With the love of a wench, let his writings be chaste;
Tip his tongue with strange matter, his pen with fine taste;
That the rake and the poet o'er all may prevail,
Set fire to the head and set fire to the tail;
For the joy of each sex on the world I'll bestow it,
This scholar, rake, christian, dupe, gamester and poet,
Though a mixture so odd he shall merit great fame,
And among brother mortals be Goldsmith his name;
When on earth this strange meteor no more shall appear,
You, *Hermes*, shall fetch him—to make us sport here."

manuscript sketch devoted to him, half a line containing one of the handsomest compliments to the good sense of the painter, remained unaltered—

“By flattery unspoiled ——”

It has been asked why a muse at once so delicate and accurate, which in painting even defects exhibited the tenderness of a friend, did not venture to portray Johnson. One reason probably is to be found in the unfinished state of the poem. He formed an admirable subject, great, varied, and peculiar, marked by strong lines, and though of rough conduct and a stinging tongue, yet with so many redeeming qualities of mind and heart, that a finished picture might serve to stamp the poetical character of any writer; and from long and intimate knowledge of him, none we are assured could have done it with such truth and good nature as the Irish Poet. An attempt to supply the omission came from an anonymous pen a few days after the appearance of the poem; but between the dauber and the accomplished artist, the distance is indeed vast.*

The following advertisement in the form of a letter to the publisher introduced Retaliation to the public:—

“Sir,

“In some part of Dr. Goldsmith’s works he confesses himself so unable to resist the attacks of hungry compilers, that he contents himself with the demand of the fat man who when at sea, and the crew in great want of provisions, was pitched on by the sailors as the properest subject to supply their wants; he found the necessity of acquiescence, at the same time making the most reasonable demand for the first cut off himself for himself.

* “Here rests our great Doctor, who held it high treason
 With wine, punch, or ale to encumber his reason;
 Yet may fairly be classed with the rest of the hive
 While erect in his chair, he’s thus buried alive;
 Unwieldy with knowledge, and buckram’d in pride,
 No mirth could unbend him, no trifle abide;
 His sense when he deign’d some deep thought to unfold,
 Spoke by starts or set phrase like the oracles old;
 And his wit (as the sun when the rack rides on high,
 With sudden effulgence beams full from the sky,
 Then pops in his head and puts wheat-ears in terror),
 Flashed abroad for a moment, then left us in error;
 Unless some new sophistry happen to strike,
 Or poor Scotland come in from some quarter oblique;
 Then he flash’d like a fury, flay’d alive, tore to pieces,
 With hail, wind, thunder, lightning, the storm still increases
 All to ruin a land not worth conquest or keeping,
 Or slay some poor insect ’twixt waking and sleeping.
 Thus I strike at his fame with which mine will not vie,
 As men batter a fort who can’t build a pig-sty;
 Let his friends all attend to the worst I can say,
 They must join in the cavil and call it fair play;
 For none get their share from this miserly elf,
 Of what all seem’d to value most highly—himself.”

"If the Doctor in his life-time was forced by these anthropophagi to such capitulations, what respect can we now expect from them? Will they dine on his memory? To rescue him from this insult, I send you an authentic copy of the last poetic production of this great and good man; of which I recommend an early publication to prevent spurious editions being ushered into the world.

"Doctor Goldsmith belonged to a club of beaux esprits where wit sparkled sometimes at the expense of good nature. It was proposed to write Epitaphs on the Doctor; his country, dialect, and person furnished subjects of witticism. The Doctor was called on for Retaliation and at their next meeting produced the following poem, which I think adds one leaf to his immortal wreath."

The first edition, as may be supposed from affecting so many distinguished persons, sold rapidly,—the publisher said in a few hours. A second and third impression were called for; and about the middle of June a fourth, which came recommended by an additional epitaph on Mr. Caleb Whitefoord, a facetious writer for the newspapers, whose cross-readings under the signature of Papyrius Cursor made him known among the wits of the day. Its authenticity has been doubted, on account of appearing so late, and so many as twenty-eight lines being devoted to one whose merits were not so high as many others despatched in half that space; nor was the manuscript copy furnished to the printer in the handwriting of the alleged author.

Whitefoord has therefore been suspected by surviving acquaintance, though perhaps erroneously, of being himself the writer; if such be really the case the imitation at least is good, for it contains a few sentiments known to be those of the Poet, and while it gives due praise to the individual, alludes to his connexion with the daily press in a manner which he himself would probably not have done. It is indeed possible that Goldsmith, who thought favourably of his humour and facetious qualities, may have written them on another occasion, or without meaning they should find place in the poem. They were appended to the edition in question by the following introductory notice, which on the face of it contains beyond doubt an untruth in the answer put into the mouth of the reputed writer, who was then on his death-bed:—

"After the fourth edition of this poem was printed, the publisher received an Epitaph on Mr. Whitefoord from a friend of the late Doctor Goldsmith inclosed in a letter of which the following is an abstract.

"I have in my possession a sheet of paper containing near forty lines in the Doctor's own handwriting; there are many scattered broken verses on Sir Joshua Reynolds, Counsellor Ridge, Mr. Beauclerk, and Mr. Whitefoord. The Epitaph on the last-mentioned gentleman is the only one that is finished, and therefore I have copied it that you may add it to the next edition. It is a striking proof of Doctor Goldsmith's good nature. I saw this sheet of paper in the Doctor's room five or six days before he died; and as I had got all the other epitaphs, I asked him if I might take it. *In truth you*

may, my boy (replied he,) *for it will be of no use to me where I am going.**

Early in February 1774, was first announced for publication in the following month, "The History of the Earth and Animated Nature." The bookseller (Griffin) with whom the agreement for that work had been made, and who it will be remembered had sold his share so far back as June 1772, wished now to become again a proprietor, and with this object the following letter of Goldsmith was written to the purchaser. It is without date, but endorsed February 20th 1774; and from this we learn that he had thoughts of extending the plan beyond the original limits:—

"To Mr. Nourse.

"SIR,

As the work for which we engaged is now near coming out and for the *over* payment of which I return you my thanks, I would consider myself still more obliged to you, if you would let my friend Griffin have a part of it. He is ready to pay you for any part you will think proper to give him, and as I have thoughts of extending the work into the *vegetable* and *fossil* kingdoms, you shall share with him in any such engagement as may happen to ensue.

"I am Sir,

"Your very humble servant,

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH."†

* The cause of the prominent station in the poem occupied by Mr. Thomas Townshend, afterwards Lord Sidney, when Burke is said to be—

straining his throat,

To persuade Tommy Townshend to lend him a vote,

has given rise to various conjectures without a satisfactory solution. No quarrel with the poet is known to have occurred; and in fact another name is said to have originally occupied the place now filled by that of Mr. Townshend. Sir James Mackintosh believed that the latter was substituted on account of persisting to clear the gallery of the House of Commons on one occasion when Garrick was present, in opposition to the remonstrances of Burke and Fox. This statement is erroneous. Whatever offence he may have given to Goldsmith, he gave none to Garrick, nor was it probable that one much in society like Mr. Townshend and meeting continually with the actor, should publicly exhibit towards him such a symptom of hostility. It came from another quarter, a country gentleman, the member for Shropshire, and occurred *three years after the publication of Retaliation*. It likewise appears that Mr. Townshend, as might be expected, far from opposing Garrick when this indisposition was shown to him, took his part. The Actor, writing to Miss Hannah More July 9th 1777, gives the following account of the affair shortly afterwards:—

"My theatrical curiosity diminishes daily, and my vanity as an author is quite extinct; though by-the-by I have written a copy of verses to Mr. Baldwin, the member for Shropshire, upon his attack upon me in the House of Commons. He complained that a celebrated gentleman was admitted into the house when every body else was excluded, and *that I gloried in my situation*. Upon these last words my muse has taken flight, and with success. I have described the different speakers, and it is said well, and strongly, and true. I read them to Lord North, Lord Gower, Lord Weymouth, Mr. Rigby &c. and they were all pleased. Burke and Mr. Townshend behaved nobly upon the occasion. The whole house groaned at poor Baldwin, who is reckoned *par excellence*, the dullest man in it; and a question was nearly going to be put, to give me an exclusive privilege to go in whenever I pleased. In short I am a much greater man than I thought." *Correspondence*, vol. i. p. 118.

† From the collection of John Wild, Esq. of Clapham.

It did not appear till about the last day of June,* when death had removed him from the scene of his labours; and notwithstanding all its mistakes and misconceptions, its errors of fact and theory, the general ignorance of the subject with which in a scientific point of view it was commenced, the anxieties and disadvantages under which during a period of five years it was carried on, must be regarded as no inconsiderable effort of genius and labour. The term genius applied to such an undertaking in the hands of most other men, would seem, and no doubt would be, scarcely warranted; but with Goldsmith it was otherwise; his charm lies in his taste in selection, his vivacity in conception, and his elegance in describing. *Nihil quod tetigit non ornavit*; he literally fulfilled Johnson's anticipation that "he would make it as entertaining as a Persian tale."

His avowed object was a popular not learned work on the subject; a design to treat of the races, habitudes, the instincts and peculiarities of animals in their wild or social state; not a formal or scientific work for the instruction of the professed naturalist. He is therefore often inconsiderately censured for not being what he had no intention, and probably had not the requisite knowledge, to be; his book was not meant as a system, but one of general and amusing information. A better grounded objection is the existence of several errors in point of fact connected with animals which were within the reach of observation and inquiry; another is the admission of a few fabulous stories of their attributes and their peculiarities taken from ancient writers. In the former, the apology of Dr. Johnson may be valid, that the subject being of an extensive kind he could not be expected to make experiments on all facts of a doubtful nature, and therefore might allowably copy such authorities as were generally received; and the same apology may serve for the latter, that without believing such stories himself, he introduced only what others had stated, trusting to the good sense and general knowledge of the reader to discriminate truth from improbability where reasonable doubts could be entertained.

The necessary information for the work was not procured without much research; greater perhaps than he received credit for, or than would have been requisite for a professed naturalist, although as we have seen by his previous connexion with books on natural history, better prepared for the subject than many persons believed. Thus Aristotle, Diodorus Siculus, and Pliny; Aldrovandus and Reaumur, Brisson, and Buffon; Linnæus, Willughby, and Ray; and many travellers and voyagers, such as Dampier, Ulloa and many others, are freely quoted; in addition to matter gleaned from a variety of other sources, showing much and miscellaneous reading, which of

* "This day is published in eight vols. 8vo. price 2l. 8s. in boards, illustrated with 101 copper-plates engraved by Messrs. Taylor and Martin. An History of the Earth and Animated Nature. By Oliver Goldsmith. Printed for I. Nourse in the Strand; Bookseller to his Majesty."—*Public Advertiser*, July 1st, 1774. In this as well as in the previous advertisements during his life, the preliminary "Doctor," or the initials of his medical degree "M. B." affixed to his name in other works, were omitted.

itself formed no inconsiderable part of his labour. Its great charm is its style; combining that ease, freshness, and freedom which throw an irresistible attraction over his pages and render every reader of taste an admirer; while after a lapse of sixty years, notwithstanding the progress of knowledge and the consequent correction of many mistakes, no book has superseded it with the general reader. It has proved upon a large scale, though less exact and minute, what White's *Natural History of Selborne* has been upon a smaller; familiar and agreeable, communicating natural knowledge in the easiest manner, and attracting readers who would have been repelled from the study of more elaborate works.

An assertion of Cumberland relative to this work is as questionable as too many of his alleged facts regarding the Irish Poet.—“Distress,” he says, “drove Goldsmith upon undertakings neither congenial with his studies nor worthy of his talents. I remember him when in his chamber in the Temple he showed me the beginning of his *Animated Nature*, it was a sigh such as genius draws when hard necessity diverts it from its bent to drudge for bread.” The acquaintance between Goldsmith and Cumberland was slight and never reached any thing like intimacy; on the contrary notwithstanding the compliment in *Retaliation* they did not like each other. That Cumberland may have called in the Temple is possible, but by his own confession he knew nothing of him personally till the latter part of 1773, and the first volume of *Animated Nature* was written three years before and had been long consigned to the hands of the publisher. Neither, had he even shown it as alleged, would it have been done with the dramatic accompaniment of a sigh, implying dislike or contempt for his labour, when it was unquestionable that he placed a high value on the first volume, and was often not unwilling to have it believed that the whole was equally worthy of favour.

About the same time also, a new edition of the *Inquiry into Polite Learning* being proposed by the original publisher, nearly a fourth part of the first was thrown out in the revision. Among the omissions are the whole of the fourth and seventh chapters, the latter containing general remarks upon the polite learning of England and France, the translation from Macrobius now included in his poetical works, and the obvious personal allusion when stating the different aspect which countries assume to one who is whirled through Europe in a post-chaise, and he who walks the grand tour on foot. *Haud inexpertus loquor*. No additions are introduced, excepting a few sentences to connect passages where others have been expunged. For this labour the sum received was, as will be seen, small.*

(No date, but early in 1774.)

“Received from Mr. James Dodsley for improving the second edition of my *Polite Learning* and putting my name to the same, the sum of five guineas, as witness my hand.

“OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”

* It was published after his death July 28, 1774.

Another of his labours now, and noticed in a former page, was a translation of Scarron's comic romance, said by the publisher (Griffin) to have been completed, excepting a few sheets, at the time of his death, though not published till 1776. Some corroboration of his having been engaged upon it at this period, may be found perhaps in the first line of *Retaliation*:—

“Of old, when Scarron his companions invited,
Each guest brought his dish, and the feast was united.”

For nothing was more probable than that the name of a writer celebrated for wit and humour and whom he was then translating, should be recalled in a sportive effusion of his own; and to this possibly we owe the whole introductory part of that poem. The version offers no particular evidence of his manner, nor does perhaps a close rendering permit it; but a writer in the *Monthly Review*, no doubt Dr. Griffiths himself, when noticing the work in question, thus intimates a knowledge of his previous translations, though the opinion advanced of their merit is by no means corroborated by what we know to have been done by him in “*Memoirs of a Protestant*.”—“We have seen translations by Goldsmith in no respect superior to the present performance. The truth is the Doctor was not excellent in this branch of authorship. The new version of Scarron is however greatly preferable to the old one by Savage and Brown.”

At this moment if we are to believe Beauclerk, who however writes in a strain between jest and earnest not always to be taken literally, he had shaken off his depression of spirits, or was attempting to do so by the common means, gayety, which he praises in some of his *Essays*, and no doubt often practised, as the best mode of dissipating care. “Our club,” he writes to Lord Charlemont, February 12, 1774, “has dwindled away to nothing. Nobody attends but Mr. Chambers, and he is going to the East Indies. Sir Joshua and Goldsmith have got into such a round of pleasures that they have no time.”

One of the modes he adopted for returning such civilities as were shown him by his acquaintance, was, as the writer is informed by an intimate surviving friend, by a supper given at his chambers, where a curious intermixture of characters, and frequently an expensive entertainment, were to be found. These parties, in allusion to the large and fashionable assemblages at the well-known rooms kept by Mrs. Cornelys in Soho Square, he jocularly called his “*Little Cornelys*.”

Occasionally this was changed for a dinner, where the guests were more select. At the last, or nearly the last of these, Dr. Johnson, Sir Joshua, and several other literary men, among whom was Dr. Kippis who related the story, were present. The first course was profuse, more than sufficient for every purpose of hospitality; but a second coming on equally liberal, Johnson and Reynolds who suspected his embarrassments and wished tacitly to reprehend his

extravagance, came to an understanding not to partake of it; the motive being instantly comprehended by all present, the refusal became general, and it was removed from the table untouched, much to his mortification.

His establishment otherwise was not at this time expensive. He retained the apartment at Hyde when desirous of a rural scene or of being wholly uninterrupted; he had the occasional services only of a man-servant (John Eyles) when in town; while his chambers and their contents were wholly intrusted to the care of an elderly female named Ginger, wife of the head porter of the Middle Temple.

He had for some time seriously contemplated quitting the distractions and expenses of a town life in order to fix his residence wholly in the country; and to such as were much in his confidence, took pleasure in stating his schemes on this subject, one of which was never to spend more than two months of the year in London. With this view it is said he sold his right in the Temple chambers about three weeks previous to his death; but whether he possessed sufficient firmness to persevere in the resolution of retirement may be doubted. Of the charms of the country he had indeed a lively sense; but London or its vicinity is so peculiarly the sphere of a literary man, either for its society, its amusements, its information, or advantages of reference, and more particularly when he is destitute of the ties of family, of relatives, or of a native place to retire to, (for he had no thought of going to Ireland,) that a disconnexion with it, or even absence for any length of time by one living exclusively by his literary labours, is nearly impossible. Few pursuits require more relaxation than literature. Solitude is necessary to an author, for in solitude must his chief labours be performed; but the task completed, few delight more in the enjoyment which release from labour brings with it; and none were more disposed to take advantage of such moments than Goldsmith.

Whatever were his determinations, no opportunity was permitted of carrying them into effect, for life and all its anxieties were soon to come to a close.

Having retired to Hyde in the month of March, the recurrence of a painful disease to which he was subject (Dysuria) brought on by close application to his desk, added to a feeling of general indisposition, took him back to London. The local complaint subsided, but left behind the seeds of a nervous fever, aggravated no doubt by uneasiness of mind. To relieve some of the symptoms, he had recourse to an emetic on the 25th March, after the operation of which he retired to bed in the afternoon, but becoming worse, sent for Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Hawes, his apothecary, in defiance of whom he persisted in the use of James' Powders, a valuable and one of his favourite remedies, but inapplicable under the circumstances of the complaint; and the result proved as melancholy as it was generally lamented. Public notice being drawn to the event, Mr. Hawes, an intelligent and benevolent man and one of the founders of the Humane Society, in which undertaking he had engaged the active hu-

manity of Goldsmith,* published a pamphlet, dedicated to Burke and Reynolds as principal friends of the deceased, stating the particulars of his attendance upon him. To this, in consequence of the remarks made in it upon the remedy being thought detrimental to its popularity, Mr. Newbery, the proprietor, replied in the newspapers, and adduced declarations of the nurse and servants, conveying the opinion of Goldsmith himself (for which however there seems no foundation) that the genuine fever-powder had not been sent him. From these and from some private sources, a full account of his illness is derived.

"On Friday the 25th March," says Mr. Hawes, "at eleven o'clock at night the late Dr. Goldsmith sent for me to his chambers. He complained of a violent pain extending all over the fore part of his head; his tongue was moist; he had no cold shivering or pain in any other part, and his pulse beat about ninety strokes in a minute. He then told me he had taken two ounces of ipecacuanha wine as a vomit, and that it was his intention to take Dr. James' fever-powders. I replied that in my opinion this was a medicine very improper at that time and begged he would not think of it: but I am sorry to say that every argument used, seemed only to render him more determined in his own opinion; which gave me much concern as I could not avoid thinking that the man whom I had all the reason in the world to esteem, was about to take a step which might prove extremely injurious to him.

"I therefore endeavoured to reason medically with him and observed that his complaint appeared to be more a nervous affection than a febrile disease. He said 'he thought so too.' I replied, 'Then, Sir, as you have already taken a vomit which has operated very well I would advise you to take a gentle opiate which may be a means of quieting the stomach; as after the operation of an emetic it generally produces for a few hours refreshing sleep; after which in all probability the complaint of the head will gradually go off as repeated experience has confirmed.' To this he answered 'I like your mode of reasoning well;' and for a short time he appeared to be convinced, but soon afterwards insisted upon taking the powders."

Protesting against being considered responsible for the consequences, the friendly apothecary took his leave, and sent the medicine. He had however gained permission for a visit from Dr. Fordyce whom the patient had consulted on previous occasions, and who having returned from the club in Gerrard Street, where the Poet said he meant to have been himself had he been well, (for it met now on Fridays) saw him in the course of the evening. The powder had been taken in the mean time, and he continued it not-

* This he states in the postscript to his pamphlet, on the illness of his patient.—
"As my late respected and ingenious friend Dr. Goldsmith was pleased to honour Dr. Cogan and myself with his patronage and assistance in the undertaking for the recovery of persons apparently dead by drowning and other sudden accidents now on the point of being established in this kingdom, I think I cannot show a greater proof of my esteem for the deceased than by applying the profits of this publication (if any should arise) to an institution, the design of which was favoured with his approbation."

withstanding the persuasions of the physician. Next day finding its effects different from those experienced on former occasions, he became impressed with the belief that a spurious medicine had been substituted for the true, and exclaimed more than once to his servants, with hasty petulance—"D—n that Hawes! I ordered him to send me James's powder and he has sent me some other." A supply was in consequence sent for from Newbery's shop, and its administration intrusted by him to the servants in attendance.

On the morning of the 26th Mr. Hawes called, but on being told his patient was dozing, did not see him; in the evening he found him low, his pulse small and quick, and with great prostration of strength from disordered action of the stomach and bowels induced by the erroneous treatment to which he had subjected himself; he had now also it appeared lost confidence in the remedy by admitting to his adviser that "he wished he had taken his friendly advice last night." Dr. Fordyce also saw the critical situation of his patient, and feeling like Hawes considerable anxiety for the safety of one whose celebrity in public life and many good qualities in private, made him an object of interest, desired the latter to see him early the following day and persuade him if not better, to see Dr. Turton, whom he likewise knew and esteemed, in consultation.

At eight o'clock on Sunday morning he was accordingly visited again; he had passed a bad night; the vomiting and diarrhoea continued; and appearing much exhausted, Mr. Hawes proposed at once to call in Dr. Turton, a proposition immediately assented to by the patient, who now seemed conscious of his danger. From this time the physicians met twice daily in consultation. So strong however was his impression of having originally taken spurious fever-powder, although what was procured afterwards produced similar effects, that he took a dislike to his apothecary; he told his servants, as they stated to Mr. Newbery, to look for his bill which amounted to ten pounds, and pay him off; he likewise actually sent for another practitioner in the neighbourhood, who however declined at first to interfere where there was already ample attendance, or judging it only one of those hasty petulancies, increased by the disease, to which he was subject, and of which he was the first to confess the impropriety. The conduct of Mr. Hawes seems to have been unobjectionable; no time was lost in calling in Dr. Fordyce when further advice became necessary; and had his published statement varied from truth, the evidence of both physicians was at hand to point out the inaccuracy.

During the following week the symptoms fluctuated; though never free from danger, so little apparently active disease was present, that Doctor Turton said to him, as Dr. Johnson related, "Your pulse is in greater disorder than it should be from the state of fever which you have; is your mind at ease?" Goldsmith answered, "it is not." The functions of the mind however were very slightly, if at all, clouded by the disease, and arose less from the degree of fever than from want of sleep; he discoursed occasionally with great calmness, was sometimes cheerful, but being unable to take nourishment, his strength gave way. Recovery therefore, although doubtful, was not

even to the last at all improbable; nor was the fatal event in the least anticipated at the moment it occurred.

At twelve o'clock on Sunday night the 3d of April he was in a sound and serene sleep, perfectly sensible previous to falling off, his respiration easy, the skin moist and warm, and the symptoms altogether of a favourable description. A little before four o'clock the gentleman in attendance, Mr. Hawes not being then employed, was summoned in consequence of an unfavourable change; he found him in strong convulsions, which continuing without intermission, he expired about half past four on Monday morning the 4th April, 1774.

Thus terminated the life of an admirable writer and estimable man at the early age of forty-five, when his powers were in full vigour and much was to be expected from their exertion. The shock to his friends appears to have been great from the unexpected loss of one whose substantial virtues, with all his foibles and singularities, they had learned to value. Burke on hearing of it burst into tears. Sir Joshua Reynolds, as Northcote informed the writer, relinquished painting for the day; an unusual forbearance, it was considered, of one who under all common circumstances rarely permitted himself to be diverted from the exercise of his art. Dr. Johnson, though little prone to exhibit strong emotions of grief, seems to have felt sincerely on this occasion, for three months afterwards he thus wrote to Boswell—

“Of poor dear Dr. Goldsmith there is little to be told more than the papers have made public. He died of a fever, I am afraid more violent from uneasiness of mind. His debts began to be heavy and all his resources were exhausted. Sir Joshua is of opinion that he owed not less than two thousand pounds. Was ever poet so trusted before?” And again; “Chambers, you find, is gone far, and poor Goldsmith is gone much further. He died of a fever exasperated as I believe by the fear of distress.”

Sir Joshua undertook to superintend his affairs until the arrival from Ireland of such of his relatives as should be authorized to arrange them. In the meantime Mr. Hawes was entrusted with the active duties of management, who soon discovered by the amount of debts, that no advantage was likely to accrue to his family from the little personal property that remained. In allusion to his pecuniary involvements, yet in a tone of tenderness, Dr. Johnson writes at this time—“He had raised money and squandered it, by every artifice of acquisition and folly of expense. But let not his frailties be remembered; he was a very great man.”*

As a means of showing their respect, his friends at first contemplated a public funeral, the pall to be borne by Lord Shelburne, Lord Louth, Hon. Mr. Beauclerk, Mr. Burke, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and Mr. Garrick. Further consideration altered this design to a subscription for a monument to him in Westminster Abbey; Sir

* “Here Fancy’s favourite, Goldsmith sleeps,
The Dunces smile, but Johnson weeps.”

St. James’s Chronicle, April 7...9.

Joshua, as was immediately announced, to draw the design; Mr. Wilton to execute it; and Dr. Johnson to write the epitaph.

A private interment was therefore adopted as most advisable under the circumstances. His remains were committed to the Temple burying ground in a spot which after being long forgotten has been recently ascertained by the inquiries of Mr. Bacon of the Temple, at five o'clock on Saturday evening, April 9th, attended as mourners by the Rev. Mr. Palmer, nephew to Sir Joshua Reynolds and afterwards Dean of Cashel in Ireland, Mr., afterwards Sir John, Day, the present Judge Day, Mr. Hugh Kelly, Mr. Etherington, and Mr. Hawes. After the coffin had been screwed down, it was opened in order to gratify a lady, an intimate acquaintance and an admirer of his talents and virtues, with a lock of his hair. His papers fell into the possession of Mr. Bott, his principal creditor.

Tributes in verse and prose to his memory appeared in the journals for several weeks; several of the number in a strain of lamentation evidently from such as knew him personally, for the loss of "the good, the ingenious, the honest (and this term was often applied to him in public as expressive of the candid and unreserved nature of the man) Doctor Goldsmith." "It should be remembered," says Mr. Hawes who felt a warm attachment to his late patient, "that he was as amiable as a man, as excellent as a writer. His humanity and generosity greatly exceeded the narrow limits of his fortune; and those who were no judges of the literary merit of the author, could not but love the man for that benevolence by which he was so strongly characterized."

"When I returned to town," adds another acquaintance,* "after his death I had an interview with his nephew, an apothecary in New-man Street,† and with the two sister milliners, the Miss Guns, who resided in a house at the corner of Temple Lane who were always most attentive to him, and who once said to me most feelingly, "O Sir, sooner persuade him to let us work for him gratis than apply to any other; we are sure he will pay us when he can."

Among the testimonies of esteem drawn forth by his death, in prose, the following just and not inelegant eulogium bearing some resemblance in manner to what was said by Burke twenty years afterwards when characterizing Sir Joshua Reynolds, appeared the day after his death, and was supposed to be from his pen. On reference however to the journals of the day, it is found to be dated from Salisbury Street, April 5th; and obviously proceeded from one, whether Burke or not, whose attachment was the result of an intimate knowledge of his character.

"In an age when genius and learning are too generally sacrificed to the purposes of ambition and avarice, it is the consolation of virtue as well as of its friends that they can commemorate the name of Goldsmith as a shining example to the contrary.

* Mr. Cradock.

† Mr. Hodson already mentioned; he may have been there some months afterwards; but he was not in London at the time of his uncle's death. His relatives likewise say he never practised professionally in the metropolis.

“Early compelled, like some of our greatest men, into the service of the muses, he never once permitted his necessities to have the least improper influence on his conduct; but knowing and respecting the honourable line of his profession, he made no farther use of fiction than to set off the dignity of truth; and in this he succeeded so happily, that his writings stamp no less the man of genius than the universal friend of mankind.

“Such is the outline of his poetical character, which perhaps will be remembered whilst the first rate poets of the country have any monument left them. But alas! his noble and immortal part—the good man—is only consigned to the short lived memory of those who are left to lament his death.

“Having naturally a powerful bias on his mind to the cause of virtue, he was cheerful and indefatigable in the pursuit of it; warm in his friendships, gentle in his manners, and in every act of charity and benevolence ‘the very milk of human kindness.’ Nay even his foibles and little weaknesses of temper may be said rather to show the simplicity of his nature than to degrade his understanding; for though there may be many instances to prove he was no man of the world, most of those instances would attest the unadulterated purity of his heart.

“One who esteemed the kindness and friendship of such a man as forming a principal part of the happiness of his life, pays this last, sincere, and grateful tribute to his memory.”

CHAPTER XXVI.

Maurice Goldsmith.—Epitaph on the Poet.—His Character.—Rank as a Poet and Prose Writer.—Members of the Goldsmith Family.

SHORTLY after the death of Oliver, his eldest surviving brother Maurice, arrived from Ireland in compliance with the summons of Sir Joshua. He was as may be imagined from his history, a plain unlettered man, too homely it seems in appearance and manners to command much consideration from his late brother's accomplished friends.

A lady alluded to more than once for her knowledge of the Poet, informs the writer, that being in a small party in the house of Sir Joshua when the latter was summoned down stairs, he returned after a considerable absence and whispered her, that he had been below with Goldsmith's brother, but thinking a little beer or spirits there, better adapted to his taste than tea in the drawing room, he entertained him in what he considered the most appropriate manner. She, with the

usual kindness of her sex, thought this behaviour scarcely becoming in the President to so near a relative of his departed friend.

No will having been left by the deceased, letters of administration were granted on the 28th of June in the usual law form and phraseology—"of the goods, chattels, and credits of Oliver Goldsmith late of the Middle Temple bachelor, to Maurice Goldsmith natural and lawful brother and next of kin to the said deceased." In the bond, bearing date the 6th of the same month, he is described as of "Charlestown, county of Roscommon, cabinet maker," and the sureties are "Joseph Cruttenden of Surgeon's Hall in the Old Bailey, London, Esquire, and William Finch of the same place, Gentleman." No pecuniary advantage it is to be feared accrued to him from the journey in consequence of the amount of his brother's debts. In July, arrangements were made for the sale of the furniture and library, * described as being "a large, valuable, and well chosen collection of curious and scarce books," and the catalogue, a copy of which has been procured and will be found in the Appendix, bears out in some measure the latter part of the description. Maurice did not wait the result of the sale, but quitted London in June; and however homely and unpolished in manners, he appears from the following letter to Mr. Hawes written about the time of his departure, not to have been deficient in sense or gratitude.

"London, June 10, 1774.

"*Mr. Hawes,*

"In a few hours I purpose leaving town, and now return you most sincere thanks for your kind behaviour to me since my arrival here. I also am thoroughly convinced of your care, assiduity and diligence with respect to my brother, Dr. Goldsmith. I am also convinced that as his affairs were put into your hands by Sir Joshua Reynolds, he could have chosen no one who would have acted with more caution and disinterestedness to him than you have done, for which you have my sincere wishes for the welfare of you and yours. I am Sir, with thanks and respects to your family,

"Your much obliged humble servant,

"MAURICE GOLDSMITH."

The spot chosen by Reynolds for the monument in Westminster Abbey was an appropriate niche fortunately found vacant in Poet's Corner between those of Gay and the Duke of Argyle, and though first intended to be given to Wilton, was executed by Nollekins, though not till after the lapse of several years. It presents a large medallion displaying a good resemblance of the face in profile, embellished with appropriate ornaments, beneath, which is a tablet of

* "To be sold by auction; by Mr. Good; at his Great Room No. 121 Fleet Street on Monday next July 11th, 1774, at eleven o'clock by order of the administrator of Dr. Goldsmith deceased.

"His large, valuable, and well chosen library of curious and scarce books, household furniture and other effects; which may be viewed on Monday and till the time of sale. Catalogues may be had as above."

white marble containing the well known inscription by Dr. Johnson. Fault has been found with the latinity of parts of this composition,* though seemingly without sufficient cause; but there appears to be a determination that no modern shall be permitted to write in that language without being subjected to sharp critical animadversion.

OLIVARI GOLDSMITH,
 Poetæ, Physici, Historici,
 Qui nullum ferè scribendi genus
 Non tetigit,
 Nullum quod tetigit non ornavit :
 Sive Risus essent movendi,
 Sive Lacrymæ,
 Affectuum potens at lenis Dominator :
 Ingenio sublimis, vividus, versatilis ;
 Oratione grandis, nitidus, venustus :
 Hoc Monumento Memoriam coluit.
 Sodalium Amor,
 Amicorum Fides,
 Lectorum Veneratio.
 Natus in Hiberniâ Fornix Longfordiensis,
 In loco cui nomen Pallas,
 Nov. xxix. mdcxxxix ;
 Eblanæ Literis institutus ;
 Obiit Londini,
 April. iv. mdccclxxiv.†

The circumstances attending the reception of the Epitaph among the friends of Goldsmith, though familiar in literary history, must not be omitted in the biography of him to whom it relates.

At a dinner given by Sir Joshua Reynolds to several members of the club in 1776, the Epitaph written by Dr. Johnson for their late

* By a writer in the Classical Journal. No. xxvi.

† This Monument is raised
to

OLIVER GOLDSMITH,
 Poet, Natural Philosopher, Historian,
 Who left no species of writing untouched,
 or
 Unadorned by his pen,
 Whether to move laughter
 or draw tears.
 He was a powerful, yet gentle
 master over the affections :
 Of a genius sublime, lively, and versatile,
 In expression noble, pure, and elegant.
 His memory will last
 While Society retains affection,
 Friendship is not void of truth,
 And Reading is held in esteem.
 He was born in Ireland
 In the parish of Forney, County of Longford,
 At a place named Pallas,
 29th November, 1731.
 He was educated in Dublin
 And died in London,
 4th April, 1774.

associate, became the subject of discussion; emendations were suggested for the consideration of the Doctor, but the difficulty was who should have courage to propose them. A *Round Robin*, such as sailors have had recourse to sometimes when discontented, and when the object was to conceal those who took the lead in stating the grievance by placing all the signatures to the paper in an equal position, was jocularly proposed and adopted. Dean Barnard drew up a witty address which was not adopted, as the Doctor might think it treated the subject with too much levity. Mr. Burke then dictated the following, which received general concurrence, Sir William Forbes, afterwards the biographer of Beattie, acting as clerk.

“We the circumscribers, having read with great pleasure an intended epitaph for the monument of Dr. Goldsmith, which considered abstractedly, appears to be for elegant composition and masterly style in every respect worthy of the pen of its learned author: are yet of opinion that the character of the deceased as a writer, particularly as a poet, is perhaps not delineated with all the exactness which Dr. Johnson is capable of giving it. We therefore, with deference to his superior judgment, humbly request that he would at least take the trouble of revising it; and of making such additions and alterations as he shall think proper on a further perusal. But if we might venture to express our wishes, they would lead us to request that he would write the epitaph in English, rather than in Latin; as we think the memory of so eminent an English writer ought to be perpetuated in the language to which his works are likely to be so lasting an ornament, which we also know to have been the opinion of the late Doctor himself.”

The names signed around this sample of literary mutiny, were Edm. Burke, E. Gibbon, Josh. Warton, Thos. Franklin, Ant. Chamier, Geo. Colman, T. Barnard, R. B. Sheridan, P. Metcalf, W. Forbes, J. Reynolds, W. Vachell. Sir Joshua consented to deliver the paper, and escaped from so hazardous an adventure pretty well, being desired by the Doctor to tell the gentlemen, that he would alter the epitaph in any manner they pleased as to the sense of it, but he would never consent to disgrace the walls of Westminster Abbey with an English inscription. Adding also, on observing Dr. Warton's name, “I wonder that Joe Warton, a scholar by profession, should be such a fool;” and further remarking, “I should have thought Mund Burke would have had more sense.” Mr. Langton it appears was the only one of the company who refused to sign the paper.

A Greek tetrastich also by the same great writer, honours the memory of his friend.

Τὸν τάφον εἰσθράας τὸν Ὀλιβέριοι κονίην
 Ἄφροσι μὴ σεμνήν, Ξεῖνε, πόδεςσι πάτει.
 Οἷσι μέμηλε φύσις, μέτρον χάρις, ἔργα παλαιῶν,
 Κλαίετε ποιητὴν, ἱστόρικον, φύσικον.

Several metrical imitations* of this have been given, but the following is nearer:—

“Thou beholdest the tomb of Oliver; press not, O stranger, with inconsiderate foot the venerable dust. Ye who care for nature, for the charms of song, for the deeds of ancient times weep for the Historian, the Naturalist, the Poet.”

Among other verses written upon his death, all of which spoke the language not merely of praise of the author but of affection for the individual, Mr. W. Woty already mentioned and one of his acquaintance since 1760, thus attempted to give him an Epitaph.

“Adieu sweet bard! to each fine feeling true,
Thy virtues many, and thy foibles few;
Those forced to charm e’en vicious minds, and these
With harmless mirth the social soul to please.
Another’s woe thy heart could always melt,
None gave more free—for none more deeply felt.
Sweet bard, adieu! thy own harmonious lays,
Have sculptur’d out thy monument of praise;
Yes, these survive to Time’s remotest day,
While drops the bust; and boastful tombs decay.
Reader, if number’d in the Muses’ train,
Go,—tune thy lyre, and imitate the strain;
But if no Poet then, reverse the plan,
Depart in peace and imitate the man.”†

Besides the overflow of elegiac strains in the journals, several distinct poems made their appearance, all bearing testimony to his virtues as strongly as to his literary merits. Among these were “The Tears of Genius; occasioned by the death of Dr. Goldsmith.

* One of these, the best perhaps of the number, runs—

“Whoe’er thou art with reverence tread,
Where Goldsmith’s hallow’d dust is laid;
If Nature or the historic page,
If the sweet muse thy care engage,
Lament him dead whose fertile mind,
Their various excellence combined.”

† When the monument was first determined upon, another bard contributed his lines in the following elegiac strain; such things are not unworthy of being recalled, though even of moderate merit, as they evince the general sympathy for him whom they celebrate, and are so far useful in teaching posterity how he was estimated by contemporaries.

“Yes, raise the monument to Goldsmith’s name,
Ye wealthy patrons politic and just,
And thou bold sculptor, to secure thy fame,
With these fair figures ornament his bust.
Religion, pointing to a peaceful shore,
Patience, in sufferings calm, on Heav’n her sight,
Learning, attentive still to Virtue’s lore,
And Candour, vested in unsullied white.
’Tis fit the man who spotless laurels wore,
Who mark’d proud empires’ glory and their shame
Who for Mankind exhausted Nature’s store,
With kings and heroes should receive his claim.
So some stuff birds, then praise their note and plume,
Tho’ careless authors of the minstrel’s doom.”

By Courtney Melmoth." "An Impartial Character of the late Dr. Goldsmith." "The Druid's Monument; a Tribute to the Memory of the late Dr. Goldsmith. By the author of the Cave of Morar." "A Monody on the death of Dr. Oliver Goldsmith. Dedicated to Mr. Burke" (by a Mr. Palmer.) In July was published by Glover, though anonymously, "The Life of Dr. Oliver Goldsmith," professed to be written from personal knowledge, but the particulars communicated are few and inaccurate.

One exception only to the general voice of praise and regret appeared in a scurrilous epitaph by Kenrick, who being the first to assail his character, and pursue his literary life with abuse, was induced to continue it beyond the grave by the provocation of finding his name in Retaliation; thus venting on the dead what could have annoyed only the feelings of the living. Indignation however was so generally excited, particularly by a supposed attempt to cast upon the deceased the imputation of suicide, though the lines do not fairly bear that construction,* that the alleged defamer, though nearly shameless, became for a time silent.

The person of Goldsmith, as may be conceived from the epithet "little" applied to him on several occasions, was something under the middle size; his limbs on which he prided himself, sturdy and well shaped; his habits active; and his appearance indicative of that power of endurance the consciousness of which probably prompted his peregrination on the continent. His complexion was pale, his forehead and upper lip rather projecting, his face round, pitted with the small pox, and marked with strong lines of thinking. Phrenologists may deem it favourable to one of their supposed points of distinction to know, that their organ of *locality* was in him strongly developed; for it has been observed there are few writers with whom the association of localities and recollections in their writings, is more marked. To the impressions made by these at various periods of life, some of his original compositions were owing; and he alludes in 1759 to the alleged external mark, as phrenology chooses to consider it, of this peculiarity, in a letter given in a preceding page; "imagine to yourself a pale, melancholy visage, with two great wrinkles between the eye-brows." His eyes were of gray or hazel colour and possessed considerable expression; and he always, as has been already stated, wore a wig.

Although not prepossessing on first appearance, the moment he became at ease the native good humour and benevolence of his disposition broke forth in a manner that attracted and secured regard. His address indicated, as might be supposed from a life devoted to literature, more of the solitary student than of the man of the world. He was willing latterly to amend this disadvantage by the assumption of a more fashionable air; but as our friends are rarely well pleased when they have not some point in their acquaintance with

* "By his own art who justly died,
A blundering, artless suicide;
Share, earth-worms share, since now he's dead,
His megrim, maggot-bitten head."

which to find fault, the attempt to remedy what he was told was a defect, drew down upon him only additional censure. The imputation was too trifling to produce a moment's uneasiness; a man of genius has something of more value to recommend him to society than a polished address; and the estimation of those who because they do not find the latter, are unable to relish the former, is scarcely worthy of being sought and rarely of being valued. In manner, and in his associates, he resembled another great poet. "Dryden," as we are told by Pope in Spence's *Anecdotes** "was not a very genteel man; he was intimate with none but poetical men. He was said to be a very good man by all that knew him; he was as plump as Mr. Pitt (*the poet*) of a fresh colour, and a down look, and not very conversable."

In food he was commonly moderate, often abstemious, and there is no doubt fancied the latter, as Dryden likewise believed, favourable to composition, more especially when employed on any subject requiring considerable effort of mind; his milk supper after a spare and early dinner, has been mentioned; and in wine, even in convivial societies when moderate men find some excuse for going beyond their usual limit, he was as little prone to excess. In this respect his practice perfectly agreed with what we find was his theory.—"How far," he says, "it may be enjoined in the Scriptures I will not take upon me to say; but this may be asserted, that if the utmost benefit to the individual, and the most extensive advantage to society serve to mark any institution as of Heaven, this of abstinence may be reckoned among the foremost."†

He had, as the slightest peculiarities of eminent men are thought worthy of notice, some particular aversions; one was to mice, another to eels, and a third he has himself informed us of, though the object seems sufficiently harmless. "Many persons, of which number I am one, have an invincible aversion to caterpillars and worms of every species: there is something disagreeable in their slow crawling motion, for which the variety of their colouring can never compensate. But others feel no repugnance at observing, and even handling them with the most attentive application."‡

The well known picture by Sir Joshua, a strong though flattering likeness, yet from being without the wig not the man exactly as he lived, is at Knowle Park, the seat of the Duke of Dorset, near Seven Oaks, in Kent. Another, painted for Mr. Thrall's mansion at Streat-ham along with those of Johnson, Burke and others, and sold at the general auction at that house, was purchased by Mr. George Hayter for the Duke of Bedford. A third, a copy from one of the preceding, belonged to the Poet himself, who gave it some time before his death to a friend, who left it by will to the late Archdeacon Cox. Upon the sale of that gentleman's effects in 1828 or 1829, the auctioneer, as the writer has been informed, ignorant of the painter and of the subject of the painting, which probably from neglect presented no-

* P. 261. † *Animated Nature*, vol. xi. p. 131 ‡ *Ibid.* vol. viii. p. 1.

thing very attractive to the common observer, catalogued the picture in conjunction with a common hearth-broom, and they were knocked down together for two pounds. Aware however of its value, the purchaser sold it for a considerable sum to a gentleman near Salisbury in whose possession it remains. The copy procured by Mr. Hodson, nephew of the poet, now in the possession of Dr. Neligan of Athlone in Ireland, is very indifferently executed; another of similar character which hung for some years in the Wrekin public-house in Broad Court Drury Lane, which the Poet is supposed to have frequented at one period of his life, is now the property of Mr. Bacon of the Middle Temple. One of the sketches by Bunbury, as has been observed, is an excellent, though not flattering likeness, yet presenting great benevolence of expression, and conveying the best idea of his countenance; two others by the same gentleman are caricatured.

The character of Goldsmith requires little more in the way of elucidation than what the preceding pages furnish. Whatever of grace he wanted in manner, there was no deficiency in those attractive qualities of mind that go to the formation of an ingenuous, and benevolent, as well as a highly gifted man. "I have often perceived," he tells us in the *Vicar of Wakefield*, and he is an instance of the truth of his doctrine, "that where the mind is capacious, the affections are good."* "He appeared to me," says Northcote, "to be very unaffected and good-natured." "It was not his nature to be unkind," writes Cumberland, "and he had no inherent malice in his heart."—"What foibles he had he took no pains to conceal; the good qualities of his heart were too frequently obscured by the carelessness of his conduct."

In the publications of the time in which he lived, allusion is more than once made to him by name, "as the honest and ingenious Goldsmith." "His disposition of mind," adds Davies in his life of Garrick, whose opinion is worth recording as the relations of author and publisher,—of expectation on one side and occasional disappointment on the other sometimes embittered their intercourse—"was tender and compassionate; no unhappy person ever sued to him for relief without obtaining it if he had any thing to give; and rather than not relieve the distressed he would borrow. The poor woman with whom he had lodged during his obscurity several years in Green Arbour Court, by his death lost an excellent friend; for the Doctor often supplied her with food from his table, and visited her frequently with the sole purpose to be kind to her."

His generosity indeed might be termed rather a passion than judicious distribution of the limited means he possessed, while in the eyes of his acquaintance, it appeared thoughtless profusion; chance likewise as much as selection seemed to present objects for its exercise. Inferences to the disadvantage of his discernment were consequently drawn by more wary or less liberal observers of mankind, and at the period of his death it was commonly said that "though

* "La bienfaisance," says St. Pierre, "est le bonheur de la vertu."

well known as a child of genius, he was not regarded as a man of the world;" and that "the unbounded liberality of his heart afforded no reason for supposing that he looked searchingly into men and manners." This however is the mistake of the severer class of judges of their fellow creatures, who confound a really benevolent love for them, with blindness to their faults, or want of observation of their characters, though such is by no means the case; it is the province of a truly great mind only to discern their errors, yet to pity and relieve their wants; and such was that of Goldsmith. His attachments were strong where he professed attachment; and even where he avowed dislike, so peculiarly sensitive were his feelings, that the occurrence of misfortune or distress in any form, converted him on more than one occasion into an active friend. Remembering these peculiarities, and how frequently in his works of fiction he draws from his own character and recollections, the origin of the sketch given of Sir William Thornhill appears obviously to be from himself.

"He loved all mankind; for fortune prevented him from knowing that there were rascals. Physicians tell us of a disorder in which the whole body is so exquisitely sensible that the slightest touch gives pain: what some have suffered in their persons, this gentleman felt in his mind. The slightest distress whether real or fictitious, touched him to the quick, and his soul laboured under a sickly sensibility of the miseries of others."

Of the defects of such a character, conviction and experience had probably made him aware, for he no where holds it up as one entirely to applaud or imitate. In another of his productions, besides many scattered observations to the same effect, we find the following:—

"In general, the benefactions of a generous man are but ill bestowed. His heart seldom gives him leave to examine the real distress of the object which sues for pity; his good-nature takes the alarm too soon, and he bestows his fortune on only apparent wretchedness. The man naturally frugal, on the other hand, seldom relieves, but when he does, his reason and not his sensations, generally find out the object. Every instance of his bounty is therefore permanent and bears witness to his benevolence."*

A frankness of disposition which led to uncalled-for disclosures, made him the subject of occasional animadversion or censure. "Goldsmith," writes Davies, "was so sincere a man, that he could not conceal what was uppermost in his mind; so far from desiring to appear in the eye of the world to the best advantage, he took more pains to appear worse than he was, than others do to appear better than they are." Whatever emotion arose seems to have found ready utterance, but the confession of weaknesses however candid, or ingenuous, induced some to question his sense, or his prudence, while the opinions, he hazarded upon literary men and their books, however honestly entertained, had the effect of making him enemies.

* Life of Nash, see Works, vol. iii.

Reserve, to such as consult their ease or their interests, seems necessary in our intercourse with mankind; when we have no favourable opinion to give, it may be wise to continue silent unless necessity calls for the disclosure. Of him however it might be truly said that his conversation was but thinking aloud.

Among the higher qualities demanding our regard was much honest independence of mind, for like Johnson, he entertained a high idea of the dignity of literature. Thus he neglected the offer of protection made by the Earl of Northumberland, when without solicitation or subserviency, a provision might have been secured to ward off the pressure of want. He dedicated the Traveller not to a patron or man of interest, but to his brother; the Deserted Village to Sir Joshua Reynolds; and *She Stoops to Conquer* to Dr. Johnson. When solicited to write in support of the ministry of the day whose political principles accorded with his own, we have seen he refused it. At a later period, he may have believed that his reputation should have won some testimony of royal favour, and he probably felt the neglect; but there is no reason to believe that any personal application with that view was ever made by him to persons in power. He would not seek for patronage, but he may not have been unwilling to be sought; what he felt to be due to his merits, he was too proud to solicit as a boon.

Improvvidence in pecuniary affairs was his prevailing fault; one of those which on him, as on others, entailed its own punishment. Such a vice or error, in men of high intellectual powers, however leniently viewed by posterity is rarely forgiven by such as live in their own day, who feel an equal jealousy of having their purses or good opinions taxed in favour of the obvious indiscretions even of clever men; nor has the prevalence of this fault among persons of that class, yet won much consideration from mankind. As contemporaries we see them too nearly; and their portion of human infirmity becomes magnified by contiguity. But it is different when viewed through the vista of time and we know their follies cannot recur; the severity of our judgment then relaxes, their finer qualities which had been shaded for a moment, appear in their native lustre, and by a generous reaction in the human breast, we are glad to render back with interest that forgiveness of error, or praise of desert, which had been for a time withheld. In such a spirit we now look on this failing of Goldsmith; on which, and on occasional peculiarities of temperament supposed to mark the literary character, we find the following remarks from his pen written at an early period of his career:—"I fancy the character of a poet is in every country the same; fond of enjoying the present, careless of the future; his conversation that of a man of sense, his actions those of a fool! Of fortitude able to stand unmoved at the bursting of an earthquake, yet of sensibility to be affected by the breaking of a teacup; such is his character, which considered in every light is the very opposite to that which leads to riches."*

* Citizen of the World—Letter lxxxiii. See Works, vol. ii.

In a similar spirit, we find another passage in the same work where may be traced allusions to his character and to some of his personal foibles.—“The truly great possessed of numerous small faults and shining virtues, preserve a sublime in morals as in writing. They who have attained an excellence in either, commit numberless transgressions, observable to the meanest understanding. The ignorant critic and dull remarker can readily spy blemishes in eloquence or morals, whose sentiments are not sufficiently elevated to observe a beauty. But such are judges neither of books nor of life; they can diminish no solid reputation by their censure, nor bestow a lasting character by their applause.”*

Viewed as a man of letters, he has long taken his stand as a classical author in nearly every species of composition which he attempted; he has not only exhibited great variety and excellence, but earned the unusual distinction of being equally admired in poetry and in prose.

As a poet, if popularity be a test of merit—and after the lapse of more than half a century we shall in vain look for a better—Goldsmith takes a high rank. He took for his model the classical authorities of preceding years, regardless of the attempt of Warton to lower their standard in public opinion by preferring effusions of fancy to truth of sentiment, the play of imagination to strong sense and vigour of thought. He has thence been said to be of the school of Dryden and Pope, though they can scarcely be said to have founded a school, who but followed Denham, Waller and Roscommon. But if we examine the structure of his verse, it will be found so little to resemble either that he must be considered to have as few obligations to their rhyme, as Young or Thomson have to the blank verse of Milton. He does not attempt the daring license frequently assumed by Dryden, but with more taste in the selection of words, and more care in his versification, exhibits more power over the softer affections than that great writer; while if less terse than Pope, he has more pathos, nature and simplicity. There is a charm in his chief poems which we can better feel than describe, partaking something of his personal character; a philosophical tone, an air of amiability, a sympathy with the sufferings of mankind, an easy familiarity of manner not without due dignity, and an identification of his feelings and affections with the subjects, which inspires a certain interest in the writer. It is true he draws little upon invention; recollection readily supplied such materials as his purpose required; and in this as has been said, he found a follower in a late noble poet, who in a few of his poems has written as much from personal impressions and remembrances as Goldsmith. His sentiments are generally just, his ethical precepts have force and truth, his similes novelty, his descriptions vigour and variety. It is obvious he was a studious observer of nature; what he saw he retained, and possessed such skill to turn to use, as to give many of his scenes a strong air of reality. He has no conceits, no far-fetched imagery, no startling thoughts; neither has he from the nature of his subjects,

* Citizen of the World—Lett. cviii. See Works, vol. ii.

any powerful displays of passion with which to surprise or agitate us; but he paints what produces a more permanent impression, those calmer feelings and domestic scenes which come home to every individual of our species.

He has the further merit in the construction of his verse, of never attempting to produce effect by straining or inversion of language; plain words are used in the plainest manner; he is easy, flowing, and free; never obscure in sense, involved in his sentences, or harsh in expression; he uses no triplets. He has few defective rhymes, and his versification generally, in addition to its polish, possesses condensation and point, yet with an ease that conceals the labour employed on its production. In all that he attempts there is so much of the master, as to cheat us into the belief, that what seems so easily done, it is easy to do.

One of the avenues to the heart of which he makes skilful use, is strong sympathy with our fellow men, particularly of the poorer and unfriended class, in whose cause his verse and his prose were ever ready and eloquent, and which we have seen influenced his conduct as well as his writings. This is always a popular theme, and wins esteem from generous minds, more particularly when our sympathies are excited by accusations of habitual injustice towards them by the rich; a theory which we know is often untrue; but as he adverts to their condition with all the warmth of a poet, we are willing to forgive the mistakes of the philosopher. When to his other qualities are added such as have been generally conceded to him, pathos, energy, and sublimity; and we remember that he has gratified the more learned and fastidious description of readers by the Traveller, and all classes by the Deserted Village and the Hermit, we shall cease to be surprised at the multiplied editions of his works continually issuing from the press.

Peculiar theories of poetry, or attachment to what are called other schools in the art, have produced some attempts to detract from his merit. Thus one critic dislikes his supposed school, or model, considers his popularity no test of excellence, and tells us to our amazement that he wants fancy and pathos.* Another (Dr. Beattie) who was himself a poet, expressly tells us in contradiction to this, that he is distinguished for "pathos, energy, and even sublimity."

As an example of a third class of opinions, we may quote Cumberland, who however displays something of the temper of a writer conscious that his epic was unread, while the smaller poems of Gold-

* "His poems I esteem to possess great value, because they are both original, and among the most finished of their kind; but I never can yield to that school of criticism of which Dr. Johnson was the master, that that is a very high kind. Goldsmith was like Pope, a poet rather of reason *than of fancy or pathos*; and his popularity does not appear to me by any means a test, though a favourite test with Johnson, of his transcendent claims. But it seems the style of poetry he adopted resulted not merely from the character of his genius but from the conviction of his judgment that it was the best."—*Censura Literaria* by SIR EGERTON BRIDGES.

smith found their way into all hands. "That he was a poet," he tells us, "there is no doubt; but the paucity of his verses does not allow us to rank him in that high station where his genius might have carried him. There must be bulk, variety and grandeur of design to constitute a first rate poet. The Deserted Village, Traveller, and Hermit are all specimens, beautiful as such; but they are only birds' eggs on a string, and eggs of small birds too."

What is meant by the phrase "birds' eggs on a string" is not very clear; that he did not write very long poems we know; that he failed to do so from want of the requisite powers, no one who reads him will believe; and this the critic even appears to admit. But we have positive proofs in the remarks scattered through his writings and such as fell from him in conversation, that he thought the greater part of modern poems defective in expanding upon a large number of lines the ideas which with more skill and wiser ambition, might have been condensed into a few. Thus in the Vicar of Wakefield as we have seen, he censures the use of epithets as introducing a false taste into English poetry, increasing the sound without carrying on the sense. In the selections from the Poets it will also be remembered, he characterizes Eloisa to Abelard as "drawn out to too tedious a length;" he calls Thomson "a verbose poet;" and if we may believe Mr. Cradock, he considered even the lines of Gray's Elegy capable of being curtailed with advantage; he praises Parnell's Hermit as being "perspicuous and *concise*;" and his own example proves that he considered expansion fatal to the generality of poetry. Had he believed distinction to await less the strength of his lines than their arithmetical amount, this defect might have been amply remedied, for he blotted out infinitely more than he published. By contracting his limits he hoped to add to his power; and if equal severity of pruning had been used by contemporary and preceding writers, (always excepting Pope and Gray, who carried this species of literary scrutiny sufficiently far,) to their superfluous and indifferently lines, how many would be shorn of their present dimensions?

Bulk indeed is the criterion of the tradesman rather than of the critic; it is of value in commerce, though not essential to wit. The claims of the poet to superiority are grounded upon other considerations; such as the judgment shown in the selection of his subjects, and the taste and ability displayed in their execution. If in these we find Goldsmith happy, choosing as themes national characteristics which seldom change, and natural objects which never tire, and treating both with uncommon skill, he must be considered to possess the first requisites of a good poet. A great statesman and also an excellent judge of poetry (Mr. Fox,) declared there was not a bad line in the Traveller. Lord Byron has been more general and more emphatic in his commendation. "You say" he replies to an observation made on Don Juan,* "that one half is very good; you

* In allusion to the 3d and 4th Cantos: Moore's Life of Lord Byron, vol. iv. p. 306.

are wrong; for if it were, it would be the finest poem in existence. Where is the poetry of which one half is good? Is it the *Æneid*? Is it Milton's? Is it Dryden's? Is it any one's except Pope's and Goldsmith's, of which all is good. And yet these two last are the poets your pond poets would explode."

Grandeur of design, stated by Cumberland as another requisite of first rate poetry, may form no certain test of merit. We have had many epics since the death of Goldsmith, embracing what the foregoing critic considers so essential, namely, "bulk, variety, and grandeur of design" wholly unread and unthought of, not surviving even the year of their birth, and this simply because though not always ill conceived, they were badly executed. Execution would therefore seem the first requisite in a poem; the plan or "design" appears but of secondary character, if we are permitted to judge from experience, rather than from an erroneous theory. Were it true that greatness of conception chiefly, is necessary to form good poems or distinguished poets, what shall become of most of the Greek and Latin writers? What of Dryden? What of Pope, Thomson, Dyer, Sommersville, and even Young? What of Lord Byron in *Childe Harold*? for in none of these however admirable otherwise, is there what is understood by "grandeur of design." If paucity of verses again be objected to as fatal to the pretensions of poets, what is to become of Collins with his eclogues? Of Gray with his odes? Of Burns with his songs? Of Waller, Denham, Addison, Parnell, and the long catalogue of names which make up the list of English poets whose works want the length and most of them the merit, of those of Goldsmith?

There are readers and occasional critics of another description. A few who are without rank in letters appear to be sufficiently conscious of the ease and simplicity of his lines, yet commit the mistake of undervaluing them; and seem to think that what is so exquisitely natural must necessarily be common-place.

They have forgotten that standard maxim in criticism, that the perfection of art is to conceal art. But we find there are some seemingly averse to all concealment on such occasions, who find pleasure in witnessing the workman's toils, and in viewing in the finished work the various processes of labour employed by the artist. One of these seems to be Sir James Mackintosh, who gives the preference to Gray, because as he says if we rightly construe his meaning, "he was the most finished *artist*;" and whose productions he adds, "to the eye of the critic and more especially to the *artist*, afford a new kind of pleasure, not incompatible with a distinct perception of the *art* employed." This opinion prepares us for a bold assertion, and quite as novel as it is bold, in the following passage: "The most celebrated poets of the same period" says Sir James in one of the journals of his reading kept in India, speaking of Goldsmith and Gray, "were writers unequal in genius but still more dissimilar in their taste. They were as distant from each other as two writers can be who are both within the sphere of classical writing. Goldsmith was the most natural of cultivated poets. Though

he retained the cadence he softened and varied the style of his master Pope. *His ideas are often commonplace and his language slovenly*; * but his simplicity and tenderness will always continue to render him one of the most delightful of our poets. Whatever excellence he possesses is genuine, neither the result of affectation nor even of effort; few writers have so much poetry with so little glare."

Where his ideas and language of the description here mentioned, commonplace and slovenly, he could not have retained the rank he has so long held with credit in English verse; for these defects, as they are soon perceptible, would have immediately displaced him into a lower station. The mistake arises from his being so wholly unaffected, that we are led to believe what he tells us must necessarily be familiar or common; yet the slightest examination shows us that his subjects were not in themselves low, nor did he fall below his subjects; he is beyond most poets, appropriate; whatever he describes few that have ventured to follow him, of which there are several examples Crabbe being one of the number, who are not compelled to imitation in thought or in language; and this could not be the case were the one commonplace, or the other slovenly. It is in fact his simplicity, the absence of all glare and effort which are admitted, by the terms of the criticism, or in short his general skill and excellence, that have misled the critic into a decision in which scarcely any reader of taste will concur. Sir James indeed was a lawyer and a metaphysician; and to such let us on the other hand oppose the judgment of a poet. Sir Walter Scott, some years ago, in performing the office of reviewer to a volume of poems in a distinguished periodical work, thus writes:—

"In a subsequent poem, Mr. Pratt is informed (for he probably never dreamt of it) that he inherits the lyre of Goldsmith. If this be true the lyre is much the worse for wear; and for our parts we would as soon take the bequest of a Jew's harp as the reversion of so worthless an instrument.

"This is the third instance we remember of living poets being complimented at the expense of poor Goldsmith. A literary journal has thought proper to extol Mr. Crabbe as far above him; and Mr. Richards (a man of genius also we readily admit) has been said in a note to a late sermon, famous for its length, to unite 'the nervousness of Dryden with the ease of Goldsmith.' This is all very easily asserted. The native ease and grace of Goldsmith's versification have probably led to the deception; but it would be difficult to point out one among the English poets less likely to be excelled in his own style than the author of the 'Deserted Village.' Possessing much of the compactness of Pope's versification, without the monotonous structure of his lines; rising sometimes to the swell and fullness of Dryden, without his inflations; delicate and masterly in his

* Sir James does not seem to have wholly admired Cowper. He says the talent of writing verse with elegance and harmony "was rather bestowed on Cowper with a niggardly hand." And again he talks of "the long deserts over which the poetical passages of Cowper are scattered."—*Life*, vol. ii. pp. 230, 235.

descriptions; graceful in one of the great graces of poetry, its transitions; alike successful in his sportive or grave, his playful or melancholy mood; he may long bid defiance to the numerous competitors whom the friendship or flattery of the present age is so hastily arraying against him.”*

“Goldsmith’s poetry,”—says Mr. Thomas Campbell, among other remarks on the characteristics which particularly distinguish it,—“enjoys a calm and steady popularity, and presents a distinct and unbroken view of poetical delightfulness. His descriptions and sentiments have the pure zest of nature. He is refined without false delicacy and correct without insipidity. Perhaps there is an intellectual composure in his manner which may in some passages be said to approach to the reserved and prosaic; but he unbends from this graver strain of reflection to tenderness and even to playfulness with an ease and grace almost exclusively his own; and connects extensive views of the happiness and interests of society with pictures of life that touch the heart by their familiarity.”

The term descriptive, has likewise been applied to his poems, implying something not of the highest order of merit. Yet in the same sense that the *Traveller* and the *Deserted Village* have been called descriptive poems, what is *Childe Harold*, with all its originalities of sentiment and reflection, and vivid powers of description, but one of the same class? So difficult is it to define good poetry by a name, or to judge of a poem by the supposed class to which it belongs.

To the execution and tendency of his poems, which are more material objects than their class, we have the following unquestionable testimony:—

“I have read,” says Cowper writing to Lady Hesketh in 1785, and as this seems to have been the first perusal, the fact would surprise us but that he professed to be no reader of poetry—“Goldsmith’s *Traveller* and *Deserted Village*, and am highly pleased with them both; as well for the manner in which they are executed, as for their tendency, and the lessons that they inculcate.”

To fix the precise place he occupies among English poets is more difficult, as critics and readers will ever differ in opinion according to their differences of taste. But looking to all his qualities, the wit and delicate satire of *Retaliation*, the familiar humour of the *Haunch of Venison* and shorter pieces, the unaffected simplicity of the *Hermit*, no doubt the finest ballad in our, and probably in any other, language, and the serious powers displayed in his ethical poems, he will take rank among those of the last age next to Dryden and Pope. This place is fairly due to him whether we look to his variety or excellence, his vigour and extent of thought, or power of touching the heart; for looking at Gray, Akenside, and any other who lived in his own day, we shall find them all inferior in that combination of qualities necessary to constitute an eminent, and—for in matters of general taste it is impossible to overlook this quality—popular, poet.

* *Quarterly Review*, vol. iv. pp. 516-17.

That he did not write more in that capacity we may regret, though his reasons were sufficiently cogent. By his own account, sometimes expressed jocularly and sometimes with a tone of bitterness, he declared he could not live by it; and he declined dying a martyr even to poetry. That he had all the love for his art which clings to the true poet, there is no doubt, and we shall in vain look for a more affecting address to it than in the valedictory lines, not meant to be adhered to we are assured had his pecuniary circumstances improved, in the conclusion of the *Deserted Village*—and which though adverted to before will bear repetition—

“And thou, sweet Poetry! thou loveliest maid,
Still first to fly where sensual joys invade;
Unfit, in these degenerate times of shame,
To catch the heart, or strike for honest fame:
Dear, charming nymph, neglected and decried,
My shame in crowds, my solitary pride.
Thou source of all my bliss and all my wo,
That found'st me poor at first, and keep'st me so;
Thou guide by which the nobler arts excel,
Thou nurse of every virtue, fare thee well!”

It seems also to have been forgotten by all who advert to the limited quantity of Goldsmith's poetry, that he died at the age of little more than forty-five, in the very vigour of life, when his powers were matured, his imagination heightened, his power of thought strengthened, when much was expected from him, when much we may reasonably believe would have been achieved, and the anticipation of Dr. Johnson realized, that “Every year he lived he would have deserved *Westminster Abbey* the more.” At such an age, Cowper, who became one of our most popular and prolific Poets, was still unknown to the world.

Three natives of Ireland, and the circumstance is not unworthy of remark, stand nearly, if not quite, at the head of our prose literature as regards their styles, though each as different in manner as he was in genius; these are Swift in what is called the plain style, Goldsmith in the middle or more elegant style, and Burke in that of the higher order of eloquence. With the former and the latter we have at present nothing to do. But the claim of Goldsmith to take rank as one of the first, if not the very first of the elegant writers of our country, must not be passed unnoticed. Addison indeed is not forgotten; he long and worthily occupied that station, nor should any merit be withheld from him to the undue exaltation of any other candidate, as his purity, ease, and idiomatic English, deserve all praise. With something less of purity, Goldsmith has however equal ease, greater perspicuity, more variety, and more strength; if he conjoin therefore at once vigour and ease, and impress the reader more powerfully either by the construction of his sentences or the selection of his words, he may divide at least the palm with Addison, if not seize it from him altogether; a distinction in letters which has been indeed assigned him by more than one professedly critical writer.

In running over his pages, it will be seen that he is rarely or never to be caught in a long or slovenly sentence; we see none cut short for the sake of mere point, or rounded for its sonorous effect; he is free from every appearance of labour or affectation. The words, which have no resemblance to the "learned length or sound" of those of Johnson, fall into their proper places without seeming effort, and upon the ear with musical cadence. All his earlier as well as later literary labours exhibit the same characteristic, so that his style may be considered formed as much by native good taste or a fine ear, as by study, though the latter was not neglected. If there be a shade of difference in his various productions, the *Vicar of Wakefield* and *Citizen of the World* appear to be written in the simplest manner; in addresses to the public in the way of advertisement for his bookseller, he is, as was probably required of him in order to attract readers, smart, epigrammatic, or antithetical; in his histories, and particularly in the first and some other volumes of *Animated Nature*, he is eloquent, natural, and polished in a high degree. Without rejecting ornament he is sparing of it; he admits of none that retards for a moment the onward course of his subject, and his language is intelligible to the most unlearned reader. "Taste in writing" he says in a chapter of the *Inquiry into Polite Learning* which was expunged in the second edition, "is the exhibition of the greatest quantity of beauty and of use, that may be admitted into any description without counteracting each other." By this rule it may be presumed his own style was formed.

Goldsmith as well as Addison, is distinguished more by humour than by wit though this quality is frequent in both; and by a suavity of manner that aims to correct our follies through the medium of gentle raillery or persuasion, rather than by satire authoritative or admonition. They seem like men speaking to men as their equals; neither assuming the lash of the satirist, nor the dictatorial superiority of the philosopher; and this forms one of the reasons why both have secured so strong a hold upon popular favour. If either writer were the subject of strong passions, we should not be led to suspect it by any thing discoverable in their writings; we find nothing of bitterness, of sarcastic animadversion, no invective, no exaggeration of fact, in their fictions, no overstraining of character. All is equable, smooth and natural, with an air of good nature and moderation that win upon the reader; both teach the purest morality in the most engaging manner. Between two such writers, it may be difficult to decide which shall have the stronger claim upon our gratitude and esteem; both have laboured for the correction of our follies, for the inculcation of the best principles, and by the literary as well as moral excellence of their writings, have thrown no common brilliancy over the popular literature of their country.

"The wreath of Goldsmith," says Sir Walter Scott, "is unsullied; he wrote to exalt virtue and expose vice; and he accomplished his task in a manner which raises him to the highest rank among British authors. We close his volume (the novel) with a sigh that such an author should have written so little from the stores of his own genius,

and that he should have been so prematurely removed from the sphere of literature which he so highly adorned."

"There is," says Cumberland, and no ordinary merit could have extracted such testimony from him, "something in Goldsmith's prose that to my ear is uncommonly sweet and harmonious; it is clear, simple, easy to be understood; we never want to read his period over except for the pleasure it bestows; obscurity never calls us back to a repetition of it."

"As a prose writer," says Dr. Anderson in his *British Poets*, "Goldsmith must be allowed to have rivalled and even exceeded Dr. Johnson and his imitator Dr. Hawkesworth, the most celebrated professional prose writer of his time. His prose may be regarded as the model of perfection, and the standard of our language; to equal which the efforts of most will be vain, and to exceed it, every expectation, folly."

To these may be added what is sufficient for the fame of any writer, the well-known eulogium of Johnson, who in the life of Parnell characterizes Goldsmith as "a man of such variety of powers and such felicity of performance that he always seemed to do best that which he was doing; a man who had the art of being minute without tediousness, and general without confusion; whose language was copious without exuberance, exact without constraint, and easy without weakness."

Were not the decisions of criticism as different as the several writers of it, we should be often surprised at the variations they display. In the opinion formed of Goldsmith's prose, as well as of certain points in his poetry, Sir James Mackintosh again seems to dissent from general opinion; but we may account for this perhaps by remembering that his own style of composition differs widely from so unaffected a model; *his* defect in general opinion, is too much labour; he exhibits more than is agreeable of what in characterizing Gray's poetry, he calls the "finished artist." "His prose," writes Sir James, "is of a pure school, but not of sufficient elegance to atone for the substantial defects of his writings, except indeed in one charming novel in which if he had more abstained from commonplace declamation, less indulged his national propensity to broad farce, and not at last hurried his personages out of their difficulties with improbable confusion, he would have reached nearly the highest rank in that species of composition."

To this estimate of the prose of Goldsmith, which from all other critics has received the praise of great elegance, let us again contrast, in concluding this account and in addition to what has been already quoted, the opinion of the late Lord Dudley and Ward, no ordinary authority on such a subject, when likewise exercising the office of reviewer in the same journal in which Sir Walter Scott records his opinion of his poetry.

"The Irish," said his Lordship, "are rich beyond most other nations in natural endowments and they are daily advancing in education and knowledge. Their great defect is bad taste. This is the rock upon which the best talents among them are wrecked; and

this will continue to be the case as long as they insist upon decoration and sublimity in works which properly belong to the 'middle style.' As a first step toward improvement we would heartily recommend them to choose some safer and less brilliant object of imitation. If they seek it among their own countrymen, the name of Swift will at once occur; and in more recent times, they will find in the prose of Goldsmith as perfect a model as any that exists in our language of purity, facility, and grace, of clear lively narration, of the most exhilarating gayety, of the most touching pathos, in short of almost every merit that style can possess, except in those comparatively few instances in which the subject calls for a display of higher and impassioned eloquence."*

Inquiries being frequently made respecting the Poet's family, arising from notices occasionally seen in the public journals, the following particulars exhibiting some of the peculiarities and vicissitudes in life to which its members were said to be subject, may interest the reader.

The death of the Rev. Henry Goldsmith, his elder brother to whom the Traveller was dedicated, in 1768, has been mentioned, leaving a widow, son, and daughter. The former visited London in 1777 and became known to Dr. Johnson, Mr. George Steevens, and other literary friends of her brother-in-law who contributed some pecuniary aid; and Johnson particularly desired she would on her return, procure authentic materials for the Poet's life. Fears having been entertained of the loss of the vessel in which she returned to Ireland, Dr. Johnson was enabled to contradict the report in the following note to Steevens, dated 25th February, 1777.

"You will be glad to hear that from Mrs. Goldsmith whom we lamented as drowned, I have received a letter full of gratitude to us all, with promise to make the inquiries which we recommended to her.

"I would have had the honour of conveying this intelligence to Miss Caulfield, but that her letter is not at hand, and I know not the direction. You will tell the good news."

Being but slenderly provided for she afterwards accepted the situation of matron to the Meath Infirmary at Navan. Her daughter, Catherine, the Rev. Thomas Handcock mentions in a letter to the late Mr. Cooper Walker, Oct. 7th 1799 as "possessing an uncommon genius for music. * * *. She is as like in her features to the painting of the Poet by Sir Joshua Reynolds, as possible." She wrote a few pieces in prose and verse which were praised by her acquaintance, taught music some years in Dublin, where she is well remembered; but laboured under the disadvantage of eccentric habits and unsettled opinions; and to the great scandal of her surviving friends who consider it one of the blots in the family, died professing the Roman Catholic faith.

* Quarterly Review, vol. vi., Article on Hardy's Life of Lord Charlemont.

Just before this event, Bishop Percy had endeavoured to assist her, by the publication of her uncle's works, as appears by a letter from him to Mr. Hawkins Browne, Nov. 2d, 1802.* "When I was last in England I applied to you in behalf of a poor niece, of our excellent poet Dr. Goldsmith, the daughter of his brother, to whom he addressed his fine poem 'The Traveller' thinking she was a proper object for some charity at your disposal. You then rectified my mistake in that particular, but most kindly offered to promote the sale of an edition of her uncle's works which I was then promoting for her benefit. This was published last spring by Messrs. Cadell and Davies, in 4 vols. 8vo., to which I contributed materials for an improved account of the author's life, and the publishers gave me, 200 copies to be disposed of, for the benefit of his poor relations."

Henry, the son, was distinguished for spirit, intelligence, and personal beauty; it is recorded of him that having broken his leg in some daring feat of activity, and finding after the lapse of a fortnight that it was improperly set by the surgeon, he designedly broke it again for the purpose of having this operation more correctly conducted. His subsequent history partakes so much of the changes of fortune said to characterize the family that it must not be omitted here. A commission being obtained for him in the army, he quitted Ireland for North America about the year 1782; but this portion of his history may be told in the words of his constant friend and correspondent the Rev. Tho^s. Handcock, in a letter to Jos^h. Cooper Walker Esq. Oct. 7th 1799.

"The only persons of his (Oliver's) family that I know to be now living, are Henry Goldsmith, the nephew before mentioned, late a lieutenant in the 54th regiment; a man who with an uncommon flow of spirits, possesses a large portion of his uncle's genius. Whilst labouring under the effects of a wound he received in America during the war there, he was much indebted to the tenderness of a young lady of Rhode Island,—daughter of a rebel family upon whom he had been quartered, and in gratitude married her. Her family offered 6000*l*. with her, on condition of quitting the British service; but he declined it, and her fortune became confiscated in consequence of some vicissitudes in the campaign. After the peace he sold out and settled with her somewhere in Nova Scotia; where by dint of labour and industry, aided by the friendship of his regiment then quartered there, he reclaimed a large tract of ground, and erected saw-mills whereby he had a prospect of affluence; but was once, by an accidental fire, and again by an inundation, reduced to ruin.

"In short for many years he plunged through unheard-of distresses and difficulties until very lately, when accident made our young Prince, the Duke of Kent, acquainted with his person and history; and his Royal Highness lost no time in raising him, a wife

* In the possession of Miss Boddington, to whom the writer is indebted for the favour of the perusal.

and ten children, considerably above want, as I learn by a letter from Goldsmith within these last six weeks. I had until I left this country,* received his rent and managed his affairs, and in his distresses he often urged me to sell his interest in the Deserted Village, (Lissoy) which I continued to avoid, to his present very great satisfaction."

Some letters of Henry to this gentleman exhibit strong attachment to the scenes of his youth, and a warm, frank, soldier-like spirit, that speaks highly for his personal character. May 28th, 1798, he writes, "I much fear it will never be my good fortune to set me down there, (Lissoy) notwithstanding my strong and ardent wish that such an event might take place; indeed if I shall at any time be able to take my family to Ireland to remain, my desires will be highly gratified. But I must own to you, that I do not think Ireland the most desirable spot of the globe to take a large family to at the present time.—I should like to be there myself that I might once more draw my sword in defence of the offended laws. * * * What do these people want? Is it a total abolition of British supremacy? Or a mitigation of penal statutes? Or is it not their final aim to be constituted a republic like France?"

He took the most anxious interest in the safety of his friend Mr. Handcock, at this moment of rebellious phrensy and crime. "Many times have I figured to myself in silent sorrow and anguish, the very scene which you have so feelingly described to me; nay sometimes I brought myself to conceive the midnight massacre of yourself, and all your family. * * * The escape of your little garrison, with your family in the crowd, is a miracle similar to that of the children of Israel, crossing the Red Sea. Would to Heaven I had commanded the 54th regiment as I once knew it, by your side at the time." * * * One of his sons, he describes as a "fine, open, generous tempered fellow, but idle, volatile, and giddy like his poor father." Of his paternal property he writes, "With respect to Lishoy, I have determined to let Bond have it in consequence of Colvill's advice, but under such restrictions as cannot I think hurt me. I have given up every idea of residing there, but I shall never part with it so long as I can possibly do without, and it shall be one of the articles of my will to remain in my family."

This resolution necessity prevented him from keeping; the result appears in the following communication, 28th November 1802: "The business of the sale of Lishoy to Bond is at length determined; Colvill got four hundred pounds for my interest in the lease, and I am thereby enabled to get clear of all my embarrassments." Still his heart yearned after Ireland. (Nov. 22d 1803.) "I do not like the place I am in (Halifax,) nor the climate. My heart and soul look to

* In 1798, during the horrors of the rebellion, when Mr. Handcock was, like many other honest and loyal men, compelled to fly from his residence near New Ross to escape massacre. This he accomplished with such difficulty, as to preserve no portion whatever of his property, not even wearing apparel, excepting such as his family carried on their persons. He has written a painfully interesting account of his escape, now in the hands of the Rev. Dr. Handcock of Dublin.

my native country, because there are three or four friends there with whom I commenced my voyage through life, and near whom I do most sincerely wish to end it." Dec. 25th 1803. "This day twenty-one years I think I dined with you in Athlone, and perhaps it may not be many years before I eat some of your beef and plum-pudding again. *I wish so to Harry, says Tom.*"

A letter written by him subsequently (20th March 1808) to the late Mr. Goldsmith, of Stephen's Green, Dublin, his father's pupil already mentioned, repeats the same lively and affectionate feelings.

"What a number of years, my dear John, have elapsed since I heard of you, or you probably of me! Lately by the arrival of the 101st regiment in this garrison, I have learnt from an officer of that corps, Mr. Anthony Dillon of Roscommon, that he knew you. It delighted me to hear that you are well, and that one of our name still existed, for I thought that all were extinct except myself. Pray are you married? To whom? Have you any children? How many? I could ask you almost a thousand questions in a breath.

"Since I left Ireland in 1783, (2) never hardly have you known a man, who has met with such repeated shocks of adversity, both by fire and water, particularly by the former, which twice consumed every thing I was worth.

"I am fixed here in the Commissariat Department, and have a family of nine children, five sons, and four daughters. The eldest Henry follows the profession of the law; Hugh Colvill is I hope ere this a lieutenant in the navy; Oliver is with a merchant at Boston; Charles is a midshipman on this station; and Benjamin a boy. The daughters Ann, Catharine, Eliza and Jane, are at home with me, and promise to be all I wish them. Thus in a few words have I given you the names, and situations of us all. Nothing in this life would please me more than to be settled in Ireland somewhere near the spot where I first drew my breath, that I might as my uncle says,

————— 'die at home at last.'

"What is become of all the Hodsons, the Isbells, &c. &c. in fact I almost forget the names. I do not however forget the name of Ballyoughter, where in my earliest days I recollect having spent happy hours with your worthy father, Joe, your uncles Walter and John. —Yet can still say that—

'My heart untravell'd fondly turns to thee.'

"I beg that I may hear from you, and fail not to describe every thing to me you remember."

This gentleman, unable to realize the wish of revisiting his native country, died at St. John's, New Brunswick, in July 1811. His family still survive. Two of his sons are, as he states, in the navy, officers of merit. Another, who has been since 1814 an officer highly esteemed in the Commissariat in North America, has with the name of his uncle, caught no small portion of his inspiration. In 1825 ap-

peared "The Rising Village; a Poem. By Oliver Goldsmith; a work of very considerable ingenuity, and peculiarly appropriate to the country in which he resides. Such scenes as it describes must have come frequently under his view, and they no doubt afford scope for the exercise of high poetical powers; but the title and even his name are rather disadvantages to the writer, by seeming to bring him into immediate competition with his eminent relative. It was introduced to the public in 1821 by a preface from the Bishop of Nova Scotia, and the following is by no means one of its best passages.

"Happy Arcadia! though around thy shore
Is heard the stormy wind's terrific roar;
Though round thee Winter binds his icy chains,
And his rude tempests sweep along thy plains;
Still Summer comes with her luxuriant band,
Of fruits and flowers, to decorate thy land;
Still Autumn, smiling o'er thy fertile soil,
With richest gifts repays the lab'rer's toil;
With bounteous hand his varied wants supplies,
And scarce the fruit of other suns denies.
How pleasing, and how glowing with delight,
Are now thy budding hopes! How sweetly bright
They rise to view! How full of joy appear
The expectations of each future year!
Not fifty summers yet have bless'd thy clime
(How short a period in the page of time!)
Since savage tribes with terror in their train,
Rush'd o'er thy fields, and ravaged all thy plain.
But some few years have roll'd in haste away
Since, through thy vales, the fearless beast of prey,
With dismal yell and loud appalling cry,
Proclaim'd their midnight reign of horror nigh.
And now how changed the scene! The first, afar,
Have fled to wilds beneath the northern star;
The last have learn'd to shun the dreaded eye
Of lordly man, and in their turn to fly.
While the poor peasant whose laborious care
Scarce from the soil could wring his scanty fare;
Now in the peaceful arts of culture skill'd,
Sees his wide barns with ample treasures fill'd;
Now finds his dwelling, as the year goes round,
Beyond his hopes, with joy and plenty crown'd."

A member of the family whose heart yearned toward the land of his fathers, though he had never seen it, thus enthusiastically writes to a relative in Ireland, in 1828: "Poor Old Ireland! generous, kind, and affectionate was the parental heart that taught me to rever thee as the birth-place of my father! Would to God that his dust reposed within thy bosom!—Yes, dear Lishoy, though a native of another clime, warmly does my heart and feelings participate in thy welfare and prosperity. Hope swells my bosom; and I look forward with joy and delight to the time when I shall be enabled to tread thy soil, visit thy bowers, breath the air of Erin's green Isle, and wander over the hallowed scenes of Sweet Auburn! Yet when that happy period shall arrive, or whether it ever will arrive, is known only to that inscrutable wisdom which governs all things."

Of his elder sister Mrs. Hodson and her descendants, and of his brother Maurice, accounts have been already given. Another sister, (Mrs. Johnston) is said to have married clandestinely under the erroneous impression of her husband being the legitimate son of a gentleman of fortune; no provision being made for him by his father, their circumstances proved by no means prosperous; two sons are said to have been drowned in the Revenue service, and a daughter is the wife of a respectable tradesman in Dublin.

The history of Charles, his younger brother, of whom some notice occurs in a preceding page, is connected with a romantic incident told in Northcote's Life of Reynolds, by Mr. Laird, a literary man well known a few years ago in London.*

While travelling in a stage-coach towards Ireland in the autumn of 1791, a respectable looking man joined the passengers at Oswestry, who on some inquiry being made had occasion to say his name was Goldsmith. A remark followed from a fellow traveller, that if he meant to visit Ireland, the name there would be a passport to favour from the veneration entertained for the Poet by the people. The stranger answered with emotion that he was his brother; and in reply to an observation that only one brother, Maurice was supposed to be alive, added that his name was Charles; that he was the younger of the family; and having been long absent from Europe without corresponding with his relatives, was no doubt considered dead; but he was now on his way to Ireland to see whether any of his kindred yet survived.

In reply to further questions an early account of his visit to England, was given nearly similar to that already mentioned. He had been induced to visit Oliver in London, he said, with the expectation of being provided for, but finding his mistake, had after some delay quitted it without ceremony and embarked a friendless adventurer for the West Indies. In Jamaica and in some other of the islands he had ever since resided, had amassed some property by his industry, was married and had children; and had revisited England alone to ascertain the propriety of transferring them and his property thither; but wished first to see how his relatives were situated in Ireland, and whether they would know or receive him, if told he had returned as poor as he set out.

This design it appears was carried into effect under circumstances somewhat dramatic, with Maurice, who received his long lost brother in the warmest manner. Charles afterwards proceeded to the West Indies, brought his family to Europe about 1795 or 1796, and resided for some time in the Polygon in Somers Town,† and having proceeded to France after the peace of Amiens, narrowly escaped detention there on the resumption of hostilities in 1803.

* Northcote assured the writer of these pages that Laird, not himself, procured the greater part of the materials for the Life of Sir Joshua and put them together; his own part was small, and confined chiefly to criticism on arts and artists.

† So the writer was informed by the author of Caleb Williams, who at that time lived within a door or two of him, and whose death while these sheets are passing through the press has been announced.

There being then no nearer relative of the Poet living, Bishop Percy wished him to profit by the remaining copies of the edition of his brother's works, which continued undisposed of, and wrote to Malone to find him out, whose reply bears date Oct. 25th 1803.

"Not being able to execute your commission in person, I wrote to my friend Mr. Brindley of the Stamp Office, from whom I have received a most satisfactory answer on the subject of your inquiry. He found out Mr. Charles Goldsmith, though he does not now live at No. 1. Dorset Place, and the house has changed inhabitants twice since he left it. Goldsmith waited on Mr. Brindley, and it seems he has been out of England for a year, in consequence of which he never got your Lordship's letter. He narrowly escaped being imprisoned in France. His present abode is at No. 19. Southampton, Street, Pentonville, Islington. He said he would write soon to you, and seemed much pleased at the prospect of deriving some emolument from his brother's works, whom Mr. B. says he much resembles in person, speech, and manner."*

The family of Charles consisted of two sons Henry and Oliver, and of two daughters; one of the latter married a native of France, and is now resident in England; the other is supposed to have died unmarried. One of the sons, the late Mr. Northcote informed the writer, applied to him for an introduction to the stage which he had thoughts of pursuing as a profession, and received a letter in furtherance of his views to Mr. Charles Kemble, but the design appears to have been relinquished. The death of one of these gentlemen is thus announced in a Jamaica newspaper Oct. 25th 1828.

"Died at Belmont in St. Ann's on the 21st Oct. 1828 in the 32d year of his age Oliver Francis Goldsmith, Esq. This young man thus taken in the prime of life from the bosom of an adoring family, was the nephew of our late Poet Dr. Goldsmith. He possessed all those talents and virtues which can render a man an ornament to society, and long will his irreparable loss be deplored by an affectionate wife and children and a large circle of relations and friends."

The fate of the other Henry, has not been ascertained, but a person named Goldsmith, and claiming to be a nephew of the Poet died in the Cholera Hospital in Bristol in 1833; he was in a state of destitution, and may have had no just right to the honour he assumed. A few letters on this subject appeared in one of the daily journals (*Morning Herald*); and some pertinent remarks were added on the negligence of the authorities of the Temple, in not marking by some memorial the resting-place of so celebrated a writer.†

* From MS. correspondence in the possession of Mr. Mason.—By a subsequent letter to the Bishop of Malone, it appears that he received a letter from Charles, and turned over to him 60 copies of the Poet's works which remained unsold, out of the 200 granted by the publishers.

† Since the above was written, a letter corroborating the principal facts, has been pointed out by a friend in a periodical work of merit and extensive circulation (*The Mirror*) from one who knew the family of Charles Goldsmith.

"As I was personally acquainted with Charles Goldsmith, the younger brother of Oliver, the poet, I am enabled to furnish a few particulars in addition to those of

The late Mr. Cooper Walker of Dublin endeavoured to assist another female relative of the poet, by procuring for her the situation of house-keeper to the Royal Irish Academy, but from some unknown cause failed. The following is one of her letters to him.—

“Rushport Elphin, June 19th, 1793.

“DEAR SIR,

“From your goodness on former occasions, and kind attention to me, I take the liberty of requesting the honour of a line from you, to inform me what your opinion is in regard to the Academy House, whether I may have hopes of being house-keeper to it. I blush to give this trouble to a gentleman who is almost a stranger to me in every respect except my misfortunes; but I trust I have an advocate in your humane heart. I have informed you, Sir, of the Bishop of Killaloe’s goodness in handing in my memorial, and also the kind reception it met with from the members then present. May I presume to beg that you will be so kind as to recommend me to Lord Charlemont, which would forward the business much, and infinitely serve me.

“I am, dear Sir,

“With the highest respect,

“Your much obliged humble servant,

“ESTHER GOLDSMITH.

“To Joseph Cooper Walker, Esq.,
Eccles Street, Dublin.”

Philo, contained in No. 573. of the Mirror. Charles, on his coming to this country from the West Indies, had with him two daughters, and one son named Henry; all under 14 years of age. He purchased two houses in the Polygon, Somers Town, in one of which he resided; here the elder of his girls died; I attended her funeral; she was buried in the Churchyard of St. Pancras, near the grave of Mary Wolstonecroft Godwin. Henry was my fellow pupil; but not liking the profession of engraving, after a short trial, he returned to the West Indies. At the peace of Amiens, Charles Goldsmith sold his houses, and with his wife and daughter, and a son born in England, christened Oliver, he went to reside in France, where his daughter married. In consequence of the orders of Buonaparte for detaining British subjects, Charles again returned home by way of Holland, much reduced in circumstances, and died, about 25 years since at humble lodgings in Ossulston Street, Somers Town. After his death, his wife who was a native of the West Indies, and son Oliver, returned thither. Charles, Goldsmith had in his possession a copy, from Sir Joshua Reynold’s portrait of his brother; and I can vouch his resemblance to this picture was most striking. Charles, like the Poet, was a performer on the German flute, and to use his own words, found it in the hour of adversity, his best friend. He only once, I have heard him say, saw Oliver in England, which was during his prosperity.

“R. ROFFE,”

A P P E N D I X.

APPENDIX.

NOTE, PAGE 35.

Lawrence Whyte's Poems. He is believed to have been a country schoolmaster.

THE system adopted by several Irish landed proprietors, of which complaint is made in the familiar strains of Lawrence Whyte,

‘How many villages they razed,
How many parishes laid waste,
To fatten bullocks, sheep, and cows,
When scarce one parish has two ploughs ;’

or, in other words, turning arable into grazing land without regard to the wants of the people, is said to have originated in very selfish motives. A resolution passed the Irish House of Commons, “that whoever demanded tithe of agistment was an enemy to the Protestant interest ;” this, though not law, operated as such upon the clergy, who were deterred from demanding their rights upon grass land, which included all the parks, pleasure grounds, and many large estates of the most powerful men in Ireland ; while the tacit exemption thus given to that species of property formed a premium for throwing much more land out of cultivation, an additional burden for the support of the clergy was thrown upon the poorer tillers of the soil. To these and other grievances alluded to in the text, with the contrast they exhibit to the state of ease and prosperity enjoyed by farmers thirty years before, the rhymes of Lawrence Whyte chiefly advert. As these are rare in Ireland, and never likely to be seen by the English reader, and being curious in themselves as descriptive of Irish rural life between 1700-1730, a few more extracts may gratify curiosity.

Of Deoch an Doruis and his supposed spouse, in the poem already

quoted from, by whom are meant, in fact, the genius of Irish hospitality, he says,—

“They were a thrifty loving pair,
 Who liv'd in plenty all the year,
 Stood at a moderate easy rent,
 Enjoying life with vast content.
 They kept a harp, and pair of tables,
 Good oats, and hay in barns and stables ;
 And all extravagance to shun,
 He wore the cloth his wife had spun ;
 By frugal means kept out of debt,
 Nor was his door with duns beset ;
 His sideboard was not plate, but wood,
 Which made his payments very good,
 Kept a good cellar, kitchen, larder,
 And those who will inquire farther,
 His birth or pedigree to trace,
 Will find him of Milesian race,
 Descended from some Irish king,
 If all be true our Druids sing.
 His grandsire's fate did oft bemoan,
 Who forfeited in forty-one,*
 Her sire lost all in eighty-eight,†
 Which we remember to be fact ;
 Though he was in no insurrection
 But kept at home, and took protection,
 And was of the Strongbonian race ;
 All could not mitigate his case.

“Then by industry and by farm,
 They lived so comfortably warm,
 The landlord had his rent well paid,
 Nor had he any cause to dread,
 His tenant to give up his lease,
 As now, too often, is the case,
 Run in arrear, or fly away
 To North or South America,
 Whene'er the Squire was run a-ground,
 He could advance him fifty pound,
 And on a pinch could make a shift,
 To give his honour a good lift.

“It was the humour of them both,
 To live upon their country growth,
 And valued, not one pinch of snuff,
 Your canisters of Indian Stuff,
 For they could breakfast, sup, and dine
 Without a drop of tea or wine,
 And nothing foreign, she would tell ye,
 Should clothe her back, or fill her belly.

* * * * *

“He taught his sons to hold the plough,
 To sow the seed, to reap and mow ;

* Insurrection and Massacre of 1641.

† Revolution of 1688.

To take the area of a field,
 Before it was manur'd or till'd ;
 They read the Irish, Latin spoke,
 The head of Priscian seldom broke ;
 An argument could form and twist,
 Like sophister or casuist,
 They spoke it without hesitation,
 Though now a days 'tis not the fashion,
 Since graduates tell us 'tis pedantic,
 And he who speaks it, must be frantic,
 A jesuit, conjuror, or clown,
 Who has no taste for court or town.

* * * *

" Since Dechadorus play'd his part,
 To train his sons by rules and art,
 By precepts, and by good example,
 Next comes his wife to give her sample.
 The female issue were her care,
 With proper documents to rear.

* * * *

" She often made them labour hard,
 To brew and bake, to spin and card,
 To dress a dish or two of meat,
 Fit for the Squire himself to eat,
 To use their needle, read and write,
 And dance the Irish trot at night,
 They made a court'sy on a pinch
 Exceeding any country wench,
 Without a hoop look'd prim and gay,
 On Sunday or on holyday,
 At patrons* danced a jig or hornpipe,
 Played on a fiddle or a cornpipe,
 Such country dances as they play,
 On salt-box, or the tongs and key.
 Five cards they play'd with art and skill,
 As ladies now do at quadrille,
 They play'd for two-pence or a groat,
 But higher never could be brought ;
 Yet to their praise it may be said
 They made good butter, cheese, and bread,
 Good Iskebaha could distil,
 Wherein they showed the utmost skill.

" With mien above the common sort,
 They mimick'd those who come from court,
 And walked a minuet smooth and straight,
 According to the figure eight,
 And that with better grace and airs,
 Than those who dance at the Lord Mayor's.
 Though never bred in town or city,
 With repartee, or pun could fit ye,
 And as their heels denote them dancers,
 Their heads were turn'd for witty answers.
 And when at work could sweetly chime
 Their Irish songs in tune and time ;

* Patron-Saints' days, kept festively by Roman Catholics in Ireland.

Whene'er requested for a song,
There was no need to tease them long;
Such as they had they gave it free,
Without a long apology.

"Then Dechadorus ev'ry year
Could give his landlord hearty cheer
A cordial welcome to his friend,
And gave himself at latter end;
You might as well hope to get free
From Newgate, or the Marshalsea,
As strive to go by force or stealth,
Till first you drink his landlord's health,
When that was down, then you were sure,
To meet his good wife at the door,
Who with full brimmers plies you fairly,
The quintessence of Irish barley
You must comply—durante lite,
To take a cup of aquavitæ,
And tells you while it is a filling,
'Tis water of my own distilling,
A perfect cordial, and as such,
You need not fear to take too much,
Then take another cup of it,
'Twill make you over-flow with wit;
If any of the seeds remain,
Within the compass of your brain,
These waters quickly make them sprout,
And into branches flourish out:
It gives them such a sudden spring,
You cannot long forbear to sing,
It oils the tongue, the lungs, and weason,
And makes us exercise our reason;
This makes the learned and the wise,
To argue, and philosophize.
Before we part—you'll find it true,
And now, dear friend—I drink to you!"

The prevailing taste for pedigree, even among the humbler classes,
the farmer and his wife are thus supposed to dwell upon:—

"Lo! here genealogy comes in,
Then we are all but three akin,
Old Dechadorus makes it out,
Whilst flowing flagons go about,
Who rises from his elbow chair,
Thus speaks with solemn serious air:
'If we may credit any story,
Of clan O Neal, or clan O Rory,
O Connor Sligo, Faly, Kerry,
Macarty Reagh, and Sulevan Berry,
Brian Borous, offspring Inchiquin,
And we—but six or eight akin,
Together with our cousin Daly,
Our cousin Flaherty, and Maly,
The O's and Mac's are all our own,
Our cousin Reilly, and Malone,
Mac Dermot prince of Cullevin,
Mac Dermot Roe, O Doud, O Flin,

O Kelly, Shaughnessy, O Gara,
 Mac Donnel, Geoghegan, O Hara,
 And not forgetting, my dear joy!
 O Carrol, Coghlan, and Molloy,
 With many more, our flesh and blood,
 As great as these, and full as good,
 For many ages long before us,
 Were of the tribe of Deoch a Dorus,
 All kings or heroes in their time,
 Whose names in Irish annals chime,
 Descending all from great Melesius,
 A thousand years before Turgesius,
 Whom we for tyranny have slain,
 And drove away his Gothic train.
 I could enumerate you more,
 Whose predecessors heretofore,
 Have bore the sceptre for a while,
 As sovereign princes of our isle;
 Their regal race are beggars now
 Reduced to drive or hold the plough.

* * * * *

“ ‘ My wife, her pedigree can trace ye,
 From all the followers of De Lacy,
 In Connaught, Munster, or in Leinster,
 From highest lady to the spinster,
 From all the favourites of King John,
 And tells their names down one by one;
 There’s Crum a Butler! Crum a Boo!
 Pray God that all she says be true!
 For she will tell you, on her faith
 She is akin to all Westmeath;
 And to that county she may join,
 All from the Shannon to the Boyne.’ ”

Carolán (*see page 34. of this vol.*) is probably described in the following lines:—

“ The harper lull’d some folks asleep,
 Whose ditties made old women weep,
 And then with touches brisk and nice,
 Set them a dancing in a trice;
 Although illiterate and blind,
 He had the gifts of tongue and mind;
 Though poor and humble his condition,
 He was a poet and musician;
 His harp for Irish heroes strung,
 Their fall he wept, and zeal he sung:
 His old Strongbonians, and Milesians,
 He sung as Homer did his Grecians.”

Of some of the Christmas sports of Ireland at that time, we have the following curious account. Such memorials of joyous though primitive manners in England, delight us in the retrospect, and cannot be without interest when told of the sister country; in these Goldsmith no doubt often took part; and the names given were those of respectable families in Westmeath.

“ Lest any should mistake the time,
 By this our prelude put in rhyme.

We shall explain it, if you please,
 It was in Christmas holydays,
 About the thirtieth of December,
 As near as I can well remember,
 The moon was just a quarter old,
 The wind at North, the weather cold,
 In Anne's long victorious reign,
 Who triumph'd over France and Spain,
 When Marlborough's fame through Europe ran,
 Who fought the battles of Queen Anne ;
 Then did the name of Deochadorus
 Become so numerous and glorious,
 As well Strongbonians as Milesians,
 Kept open house on all occasions,
 That scarce a parish or a town
 Throughout the kingdom but had one.
 Then Cromwell's tribes, of later date.
 Laid by their civil jars, and heat,
 Became more generous and free,
 Drank Deochadorus neighbourly,
 And though they could not mouth him well,
 They into all his humours fell :
 For all who breathe the Irish air,
 Must in its happy influence share ;
 It gives them such a turn of mind,
 And makes them candid, free, and kind.

“ Should Oliver Dalton tell the story,
 Of Manus Mallan, Jack the Tory,
 Long Tom's exploits some years ago,
 Of prancing Garrot, and Will Roe,
 With all the frolics of the West,
 He is the man could tell them best,
 Who keeps the annals of them all
 At Baskin, or at Noughavall.

“ Now laying by all affectation,
 Digression, or long invocation,
 Sing thou, my muse ! the merry rambles,
 Of Nugents, Dillons, Daltons, Gambles,
 Fitz Gerald, Kellys, and Magans,
 Carousing with their different clans,
 With many more of equal fame,
 Too long a catalogue to name,
 With those who whilom there have flourish'd,
 Now dead ; or by late wars impoverish'd,—
 The task too great,—could not be done
 From Mullingar unto Athlone.
 Then honest George, who loved mirth
 As well as any man on earth,
 By good economy, took care,
 For all the seasons of the year,
 To have his table well supplied ;
 And when at home was not denied,
 With prudence and with plenty blest,
 With open arms received his guest.

“ We can't forget young Ar—— r's freaks,
 His drinking bouts with jolly rakes,

How many has he kill'd with drinking?
 How many more sent home a blinking?
 In stealing homewards, groped their way,
 At midnight, or at break of day:
 How many has he sent home reeling,
 Blind drunk, without the sense of feeling?
 'Twas Deochadour night and day,
 Until he drank himself away.

“What can we say to jolly Will,
 Whose rambles would a volume fill,
 The father of a sober son,—
 With grief we say—he's dead and gone,
 And further we shall not presume,
 But gently tread upon his tomb.

“There's Hubert the old rummager,
 With Sheill the old encourager
 Of frolics, at each drinking bout,
 Are veterans that hold it out;
 With Will the heir of Killinboy,
 Who drank his neighbours, round him, dry,
 They and Will Roe, with some few more,
 Are all that's left of the old corps.

“Young Will our hero now is miss'd,
 Whom death took early on his list;
 With Harry Bane, and Harry Duff,
 Our chiefest leaders on in buff;
 Like knights of old, each had a squire,
 Who did a waiting man require,
 The man, an underling, or two,
 His work and drudgery to do,
 This was an independent troop,
 Of Squires and gentlemen made up,
 Subalterns, and of volunteers,
 And most of them were cavaliers;
 They went in squadrons here and there,
 To graze and forage half the year,
 And made their winter quarters good,
 Wherever there was drink or food,
 At any christ'ning, feast, or wedding,
 Give them but drink, they asked no bedding.

“When brawny Bob, at sixty-three,
 Went out a mumming merrily;
 With such a squadron dress'd so antic,
 You'd swear that he and they were frantic;
 Duniel of old, was the parade,
 When they went out to serenade,
 The scene for merriment and plays
 In honest John and Bess's days,
 Whose virtues hover round their tomb,
 Which time itself cannot consume,
 From thence to Tobber we withdrew,
 The proper place for rendezvous,
 There was our wardrobe, there we strip'd,
 And each man got himself equipp'd;
 Then turning out in such disguise,

Occasion'd laughter and surprise,
 Whoever had the worst array,
 Was chosen chief to lead the way,
 To him the greatest honours shown,
 Just like a monarch on a throne.

“ One took a weaver's working dress,
 All old and tatter'd, you may guess,
 But then a mighty strife arose,
 In casting lots about his clothes.
 Hall had secured his frock and cap,
 Seven years, I'm sure, without a nap,
 Which hung together like a net,
 And kept out neither cold nor wet,
 Another scrambles for his throws,
 Who in the scuffle got some blows,
 Then does arise a greater racket,
 About a sailor's draw'rs and jacket,
 A miller's hat, and leathern breeches,
 And mittings wore in fencing ditches;
 Some wore a mask who wanted none,
 Which taken off, were much at one.
 Then some to look more tight and gay,
 Made up their furniture of hay,
 Boots, belts, and stirrups all were spun,
 From what their hobby's fed upon.

“ Who can describe the cavalcade,
 When each got on his quadruped?
 Which Hogarth's pencil scarce could draw,
 With their accoutrements of straw,
 Old garrons,* hobbies, gauld and lame,
 The riders wild, the garrons tame,
 They sweated hard to flog and drive
 Poor cattle who were scarce alive,
 Upon a pannel or long suggan,†
 You see the heroes lash and tug on,
 When Rosinant begins to stumble,
 The horse and man together tumble;
 With clothes embroider'd mounts again,
 In hopes to keep a stricter rein,
 And fain would make the garron skip,
 Until he got the second trip,
 Fell in a deep and muddy slough,
 At length got out—the Lord knows how,—
 He thank'd his stars, no limb at all
 Of his was broke in either fall,
 But by the last got mask and gloves,
 Then up he gets and forward moves,
 Was chosen out the fittest man,
 Of all the troop to lead the van.
 Then to Rathconrath in full charge
 We went to visit cousin George;
 To him our first respects we paid,
 Gave him a dance, and serenade;

* Applied in Ireland to the inferior class of horses.

† A kind of straw mat, homely substituted for a saddle.

Embracing us with as much joy,
 As George the younger then a boy.
 Then after midnight up we started,
 And after all our mirth we parted;
 From thence we went to Balnecarrow,
 To bid our cousin Jack good morrow;
 In pails we drank the night away,
 Got fuddled, sick, and slept next day.

“ Before we finish’d that campaign,
 We met at Tobber once again,
 Roused up John Mears, who by and by
 Brought us some ale and Christmas pie,
 The walls whereof were soon broke down,
 And made Salt-acre all our own.
 Thence to Nick Borren at Killare,
 Who gave us most delicious fare,
 ’Twas choice roast beef and humming ale,
 A hearty welcome and a tale;
 A gross of oaths he gave to boot,
 That we were very welcome to’t;
 And to confirm it, brought his spouse
 With flowing flagons to carouse.
 ’Twas ordered then both foot and horse,
 To Mostown should direct their course;
 We serenaded the old man,
 Said we were welcome ev’ry one,
 There we regaled some days and nights
 With various pastimes and delights.
 What churl dare kill a goose or hog,
 Sit down to eat his Christmas prog,
 His barrel tap or give it vent,
 Without due notice to them sent;
 ’Twere better for him to go to war
 Against the Turks, the Moors, or Czar,
 Or throughout Europe range and roam,
 Than think to live in peace at home.

“ This was the case in days of yore,
 Sung by a poet heretofore,
 Raheen they ruin’d, and by their cunning skill
 Drew up the sluices, and drown’d Moony’s mill,
 Poor Sam they banish’d, Dally once did yield,
 But they too sure of conquest lost the field.
 Keenoge in ashes, by their valour’s laid,
 And Ballimacallin’s night and day afraid;
 Each neighbouring village rack’d with new alarms
 Imploring peace submitted to their arms.
 They had free quarters many a campaign,
 At Ummo-more, Duniel, and Clunebane.’ ”

Rack-rents and their evils, are adverted to in another place as the standing grievance of the country.

“ Though every rent roll now is double,
 ’Tis still attended with more trouble;

The tenants rack'd they run away,
 For they must go to gaol, or pay :
 This cuts out work for the appraisers,
 And makes some landed men turn graziers,
 Who, to keep up the rate of lands,
 Do stock and keep them in their hands ;
 Some farms are left a long time waste,
 Lest their new rent roll be disgraced,
 For deeds and marriage settlements,
 Recite the present annual rents
 Which they presume will ne'er be less,
 At least while they can find distress ;
 For want of rich they do re-enter,
 As their estate, or old debenture,
 And full possession still demanding,
 Against all clauses notwithstanding.

“ They advertise it then in print,
 And all proposals must be sent
 To them in writing without fail,
 Who are the owners in fee-tail,
 With large encomiums on the farm,
 That is enclos'd so snug and warm,
 With rock and bogs and rivulets,
 Where you may fish, or lay your nets,
 For eels, young salmon-trouts, and sprats,
 Where boys may catch them in their hats,
 A dwelling house in good repair,
 With offices such as they are,
 It lies within twelve miles of Carrick,
 A market town where stands a barrack;
 But this indeed we needs must own,
 'Tis sixty miles from Dublin town.

“ Our tenant Patrick held it long,
 But then he had it for a song ;
 Some years ago 'twas raised to five,
 But Patrick never since could thrive,
 And yet before his lease was out,
 His farm was canted round about ;
 Ralph screw'd the acre up to ten,
 To which the landlord put his pen,
 And thus he held it some few years,
 But still was running in arrears ;
 For mercy cries, Let me surrender ;
 The landlord then rejects the tender.
 Ralph thus involv'd in debt took leg,
 Now Pat and Ralph are forced to beg.
 No wonder bread corn should be dear,
 And that the poor should famine fear,
 When some rich men can scarce afford
 Good bread or drink to serve their board,
 Give sparingly their sour ale,
 With coarse black bread at ev'ry meal,
 Half bran, half bak'd with mouldy crust,
 Half sour, like leaven to your gust ;
 That's seldom bouted through a sieve,

On which a Swede could hardly live,
 The dregs of musty mouldy wheat,
 Which well bred dogs would scorn to eat,
 Who, in the sense of taste or smell,
 Their masters often do excel,
 And rather feed on carrion flesh,
 Than what the Squire buys fresh and fresh;
 Just as Pat Tracy bought his coals,
 By halves, good lack! and not by wholes,
 Not by half ton, but by half barrel,
 Which made his wife with him to quarrel,
 To vent her passion and displeasure,
 That he should stint her of her measure.

"At length when you make shift to dine,
 His worship gives you sour wine,
 He calls it Bourdeaux, or Margoo,
 Which you must drink until you spew,
 And if you stir, he'll seize your throttle,
 To keep you for another bottle.
 'Dear Jack! don't leave me, my dear cousin!
 Till you and I drink out the dozen.'
 This is a sketch, we give in haste,
 Of some few modern men of taste."

A CATALOGUE of the Household Furniture, with the Select Collection of scarce, curious, and valuable Books, in English, Latin, Greek, French, Italian, and other Languages, late the Library of Dr. Goldsmith, deceased, which by Order of the Administrator will be sold by Auction, by Mr. Good, at his Great Room, No. 121, Fleet Street, on Tuesday the 12th of July, 1774, at Twelve o'clock.

HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE.

- Lot
1. A bath stove, compass front, open border, fender, shovel, tongs and poker.
 2. One blue morine festoon window-curtain complete.
 3. A mahogany dining-table.
 4. Six ditto hollow seat chairs, covered with blue morine, finished with a double row of brass nails, check cases.
 5. A Wilton carpet.
 6. A sun-shade, line and pulleys, and a deal side-board stained.
 7. A tea-chest and 2 mahogany card-racks.
 8. A four-post bedstead, crimson and white check furniture.
 9. A feather-bed, bolster, and 2 down pillows.
 10. A check mattress.
 11. Three blankets and a counterpane.
 12. Three blue morine window-curtains complete.
 13. Two oval glasses, gilt frames.
 14. Two ditto, two light girandoles.
 15. A very large dressing-glass, mahogany frame.
 16. A three-plate bordered chimney-glass, gilt frame.
 17. A large Wilton carpet.
 18. A mahogany sofa, covered with blue morine, finished with a double row of brass nails, and a check case.
 19. Eight ditto chairs and check cases.

Lot

20. Two mahogany compass front card-tables, lined.
21. A ditto Pembroke table.
22. A stove, brass fender, shovel, tongs and poker.
23. A stained matted chair, and a wainscot table.
24. Two Telescopes.
25. A steel-hilted sword, inlaid with gold; and a black hilted ditto.
26. Eleven blue and white octagon dishes, 18 ditto plates, and an enamelled bowl.
27. A teapot, 5 coffee cups, sugar basin and cover, 4 saucers, and 6 cups.
28. Two quart decanters and stoppers, 1 plain ditto, 11 glasses and 1 wine and water glass.
29. A pair of bellows, a brush, a footman, a copper tea-kettle, and a coal-scuttle.
30. Two pair of plated candlesticks.
31. A mahogany teaboard, a fret-bordered ditto, a large round japanned ditto, and 2 waiters.
32. The Tragic Muse, in a gold frame.

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3. Gesnerus de Quadrupedibus, cum fig. 1551. Baconi Opera, Franc. 1665. Blount Censura Auctorum. Lond. 1690.
4. Photii Epistolæ, Lond. 1651. Thuani Hist. sui temporis, 4 tom. Franc. 1625.
- *4. Buchanan Opera, 2 tom. Edinb. 1715.
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6. Chaucer's Works, 1602.
7. Davenant's Works, 1673. and 2 more.
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- *8. Wood's Athenæ Oxoniensis 1691.
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10. Raleigh's Hist. of the World, 1614.
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30. Histoire Romaine, Paris, 1625.

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2. Acta Lipsiensa 7 tom. 1736, &c.
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- *3. Histoire de Poissons par Gouan, 1770; and 7 more.
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